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Schoenberg

MALCOLM MacDONALD



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SCHOENBERG

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SCHOENBERG



Malcolm MacDonald

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Printed in the United States of America
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*To David, Judy,
Lucy, Flora,
and Thomas*

*and in remembrance
of Ann*

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Whether to right or left, forward or
backward, uphill or downhill—you must
go on, without asking what lies before
or behind you. It shall be hidden; you
were allowed to forget it, you had to,
in order to fulfil your task!

(Die Jakobsleiter, 1915)

But there is nothing I long for more
intensely . . . than to be taken for a
better sort of Tchaikovsky—for heaven's
sake; a bit better, but really that's all.
or if anything more, then that people
should know my tunes and whistle to them.

(Letter to Hans Rosbaud, 1947)

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Preface to the Revised Edition

Musica est exercitium arithmeticae occultum nescientis se numerari animi.

—(Leibniz)

THIS BOOK WAS FIRST PUBLISHED TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER Schoenberg's death, and now reappears in modified guise more than thirty years on. Its original edition strikes me today as something of a historical document. When a 'Master Musicians' volume on Schoenberg was first mooted, the composer was still a figure of controversy in an on-going ideological war between modernist and traditionalist critical camps. Schoenberg was seen by the former—rightly—as the principal father-figure of musical modernism and—less legitimately but understandably—as the forerunner whose achievements demonstrated the historic inevitability of the post-war serialist *avant-garde*, who took their cue from his pupil, Webern, and had since become the officially sanctioned leaders of the New Music of the 1960s and '70s. For those of a more reactionary disposition, or simply temperamentally antipathetic to much of that New Music, Schoenberg was the misguided genius whose 'unnatural' approach to composition bore heaviest responsibility for the present gulf in communication and comprehension between modern composers with their supporting coteries and the general concert-going public (whose understanding and appreciation was assumed to be limited to music written in a traditional tonal idiom).

Much of the writing on Schoenberg then available in the United Kingdom was both partisan and analytical, concentrating on his innovations in compositional technique, especially the twelve-note method and its later developments. Even books ostensibly aimed at non-specialist readers, such as Anthony Payne's admirable little monograph in the Oxford Studies of Composers series, or Arnold Whittall's *BBC Music*

Guide on the chamber music, seemed too narrowly concentrated on the technical aspects of music whose outstanding attraction, for the present writer, was—and is—its incredibly rich emotional life, the power of its musical ideas and the inexhaustible resourcefulness with which they were worked out.

It was a challenge, therefore, to write something resembling a standard ‘life and works’ that attempted to portray Schoenberg’s career and achievements fairly simply, in a way that could render them understandable and sympathetic to the general reader. It was my conviction that, although technical issues could not wholly be avoided, the critical concentration on them to the exclusion of other aspects of the music—indeed, to the exclusion of much of the music itself—prolonged and exacerbated an unnecessary alienation between Schoenberg and his potential public. It was more urgent to demonstrate the existence of many beautiful and stimulating works which people ought to hear, and make up their own minds about.

The result was very much a young person’s book, with its plethora of epigraphs, opening leap into the biography *in medias res* and passionate plea to listen to the notes and let the theory take care of itself. In an introductory note to the Bibliography I rather loftily warned my readers that much of the Schoenberg literature was ‘to some degree polemical in intention’. The ‘Master Musicians’ *Schoenberg* was also in part a polemic: although I viewed it as a polemic for common sense, and for the valuation of music for its own sake, rather than as a metaphor for cultural value or the embodiment of historicist necessity. My primary purpose was to put a wider range of people on terms of friendship with Schoenberg’s music. In this, if I may believe some of the compliments the original edition has received over the years, I perhaps succeeded. But the hostile reviewer who asserted that the book would, at a stroke, set back the study of Schoenberg in Britain by a generation—undoubtedly the greatest critical compliment it has ever been paid—was altogether too generous.

In the past twenty-five years, critical fascination with the life and work of this most inescapable of twentieth-century composers has not abated, and there has been a distinct shift in attitudes towards his music. Scars of the old battles still disfigure our cultural life; yet as the High Modernism of the 1950s and ’60s has diluted itself, so the study of Schoenberg has broadened to take in the many different aspects of the whole man: not

only the composer and theorist, but the teacher, performer, cultural commentator, painter, inventor, mystic and religious speculator, Jewish activist, and so on.

The broader focus has engendered much new scholarship around his rich legacy of art-works and ideas; while many of his writings, theoretical and non-theoretical, unavailable in the early 1970s, have now been edited and published, contributing significantly to our understanding of his spiritual and intellectual development. Interest in other members of his circle—not only Berg and Webern but also Schoenberg's mentor Zemlinsky and numerous friends and acquaintances—has engendered research that has illuminated Schoenberg from new angles. There was therefore clearly a need for a fresh edition of the *Master Musicians* volume that would do something to reflect these developments, and this I have attempted to provide.

I have also been conscious of another need. In one sense the broader appreciation of Schoenberg results from a more pluralistic approach in contemporary music itself. The serial hegemony of the 1960s eventually engendered a reaction into new simplicities and systematizations, or towards improvisatory freedom. Contemporary composers have striven to bridge their perceived isolation from the lay audience through various forms of minimalism ('holy' and otherwise), aleatoric procedures of random choice, crossovers with popular music, widespread use of collage, quotation and pastiche (whether or not informed by Post-modern irony), 'world music' introducing oriental or shamanistic elements, adventures in mixed media and even the injection of 'tonal-sounding' triadic sonorities into serial contexts. Most of these strategies owe little to Schoenberg's example.

Thus although he remains inescapable, his position *vis-à-vis* musical history is still unresolved. By today's cultural relativism, the grand old 'central tradition' of Austro-German music from Bach to Schoenberg, or Isaac to Stockhausen, no longer occupies quite the privileged position it once did. In the Post-modern aesthetic, every art-work is to be found guilty by reason of its unconscious cultural assumptions; there is no such thing as 'pure', 'absolute,' or, it may be, even 'musical' music. Nothing may be valued for itself. Thus for our current cultural arbiters the need to come to grips with the Schoenbergian achievement has lessened. He has become part of the tradition, but only in the sense that the tradition itself has become part of the furniture, rather than an ever-renewing resource.

It used to be said that he was the only great composer who was more talked about than played. The talk has continued and multiplied; it is still out of proportion to the amount that the music is actually performed and appreciated. But some works, at least, have become repertoire standards, at least if we judge the repertoire from recordings. Recorded versions of *Verklärte Nacht* and the First Chamber Symphony are legion, those of *Pierrot Lunaire* and *Pelleas und Melisande* hardly less so. Even *Gurrelieder*, the Five Orchestral Pieces, and *Erwartung* are available in many competing versions. It is not merely that today's performers actively wish to measure their talents against the challenges Schoenberg's music sets them: clearly some of his works, at least, have a public large enough to persuade record companies, even in times of corporate stringency, that it is worth continuing to record and promote him. It is this public most of all who may benefit from a new edition of the 'Master Musicians' Schoenberg.

Although the book has not been re-thought and re-written *ab ovo*, it has been extensively updated, both to keep it abreast of the ongoing developments in Schoenberg studies and to bring it into line with the more substantial and extensive format of the most recent additions to the 'Master Musicians' Series. I have striven to correct errors and to resolve questions unresolved in the previous edition. By contrast, I have otherwise retained most of the original text and preserved the shape and chapter-divisions, even to beginning Schoenberg's life in 1908 and working back to his earlier years in Chapter 2. The preface to the original edition I have left untouched, as the period piece that it is. The first four (biographical) chapters have been enlarged, mainly from sources not available to me in the 1970s and especially to paint a fuller picture of Schoenberg's relations with the many and varied members of his circle and the musical world at large. Chapter 5, more broadly concerned with his character and philosophy, has undergone something of the same process.

In 1976 Chapter 6 went as far in terms of a technical account of the elements of Schoenberg's musical language and its evolution as I felt I could legitimately go in a book aimed at the non-specialist, non-academic music-lover. It also ended on a question, rather than an answer, in terms of the precise relationship between Schoenberg's twelve-note method and the action of traditionally conceived functional tonality. In view of the work that has been done in this area in the past few decades I have been emboldened to go a little deeper. The chapter, already long, has

grown further but been divided into sub-chapters for ease of assimilation. It is still aimed at a non-academic readership, but I have included a new section on Schoenberg's philosophy of composition and have given more attention to the way he makes the twelve-note method perform in a manner analogous to traditional tonality.

In the following chapters on the various genres, the accounts of individual works have often been revised in detail, as seemed warranted by new research or my own experience of living with some scores for an additional quarter-century. The chapter on Schoenberg's songs has gained a preliminary discussion of his early *Lieder* before—but also including—Opus 1: most of these were unpublished when I was writing the original edition, and coming to grips with them shed new light on Opus 1 itself. The appendices have been revised, updated, and enlarged in line with the approach throughout the rest of the book.

Many people, too many to mention individually, have made comments and suggestions over the years which led eventually to some improvement or modification of the text. In the final stages of revision I wish to thank in particular Raymond Head for allowing me access to his research on Oskar Adler, and Mark Doran for a number of judicious pieces of advice.

Stanley Downton, Gloucestershire, 10 December 2000



The Preface you have just read was written to a book that was never published in the form that it existed on 10 December 2000. After a further four years the 'Master Musicians' *Schoenberg* has been further revised and updated, in some areas extensively, and the entire text has been gone over again. While much of the original 1976 edition still survives, it is now, at least as regards Chapters 1–6, so embedded in new matter as to be in its first half virtually a new book. The changes to the following chapters are by no means as radical, but I have continued to expand and modify these as my understanding of the individual works, and their relationships to each other, continues to change. For her patience and understanding throughout this rather tortuous process I feel nothing but gratitude for my Editor at Oxford University Press Inc, Kim Robinson.

Stanley Downton, 10 January 2005

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Preface to First Edition

Once, in the course of a long conversation with Schoenberg, I told him of my opinion that the 'twelve-note method' had been over-publicized and, in the process itself as well as in the controversy which resulted, had become greatly distorted in the minds of many people; and that this had led to strained and artificial attitudes towards the music itself. He replied, somewhat glumly, 'Yes, you are right, and I have to admit that it's partly my fault.' After a pause he recovered his animation and added, 'But it's still more the fault of some of my disciples.'

—(Roger Sessions)

'Here! None of that mathematical music!'

Said the Kommandant when Münch offered Bach to the regiment.

—(Ezra Pound, *Canto LXXX*)

EVERYONE SEEMS TO HAVE PROBLEMS WITH SCHOENBERG. PERHAPS one reason is that none of the books written about this complex and crucial artist seem to take account of the ordinary music-lover who is not consumingly interested in mere matters of technique, yet wonders if there is a way to take Schoenberg's music, despite all its difficulties, to his or her heart. For that, as with all music that has something important to say, there is really no substitute for familiarity born of repeated listening to sympathetic performances. The most a writer may do is to place the music in perspective and give it a human context; from which, perhaps, its human *content* will emerge more clearly. That is what I have tried to do. The music will stand or fall independent of any commentary; but while it remains very partially performed, confusingly interpreted, and imperfectly understood, a simple guide like this may serve some modest purpose.

Schoenberg's posthumous reputation, like the man in life, is rich in paradox. His intense and many-sided creativity—as composer, teacher, theorist—assures his historical significance. For better or worse, he changed the face of music in our century and profoundly affected the development of its language. That has brought him some respect and honour throughout the Western world. Practically his entire *œuvre* is available on record, and certain of his scores are intensively studied by students. There are schools of thought which hold that his extension of the Austro-German musical tradition constituted the sole valid historically inevitable development out of the 'impasse' of late-Romanticism along the road to Webern, Stockhausen, Boulez and beyond.

But the acclaim is hardly universal. There are still composers and writers who honestly detest Schoenberg's music and deeply resent his influence. And his works—with a very few exceptions—have not yet gained a place in the general repertoire. The general public finds him difficult, even though music has since moved on into far stranger and murkier regions, and some of Schoenberg's most impenetrably 'modern' scores were written close on seventy years ago. Many people seem to have a mental picture of a musical *monstre sacré*, whose domed cranium broods among the twisted roots of modern music, hatching artificial systems of composition, like Frankenstein's monsters, by the sickly moonlight of Romanticism's decay. Yet few can actually claim familiarity with a true cross-section of his output, and his music is seldom presented to the public in a way that encourages interest. One suspects that listeners are too often advised to strive after the wrong *kind* of comprehension—a purely 'intellectual' response to a composer who maintained that the worlds of feeling and intellect are inseparable, and not to be sundered by such artificial distinctions.

In fact Schoenberg evokes as wide a range of attitudes as he has listeners. There are those for whom he is a godlike creative genius who could do no wrong; and those who regard him as a spiritual and emotional cripple who surrendered his power of inspiration to the strait-jacket of an arbitrary 'mathematical' system. For some he is the arch-bogeyman of tuneless modern music; and for others (among the musical *avant-garde*) he is really rather old hat—a parochial Viennese neo-Brahmsian pedant left over from the Art Nouveau era, who stumbled across a fruitful constructional principle which only attained full significance in the work of

his more truly radical pupil, Webern. I know a twelve-note composer who thinks Schoenberg was a great inventive genius, but not a great creator; and a much more conservative composer who says that, though he would never wish to use his methods, he has always felt that everything Schoenberg did somehow *matters* very much indeed. And there are some (curiously enough) who simply love his music.

The fact that I belong with the last-named group perhaps unfits me to write; for one can only write out of personal experience, and whereas so many seem to have had problems with Schoenberg, I cannot remember a time when I found his music altogether strange. I must have been thirteen, and musically hardly literate, when I first heard the Piano Concerto, fourteen when I heard *Moses und Aron*. I did not imagine I ‘understood’ how the music operated. I simply knew that I liked the tunes in the Concerto and sensed the dramatic power of the opera; I liked the sounds the music made, sensed and approved something of its passion and high seriousness; felt a certain trust in the composer and a wish to know him better. Over the years I have come to know Schoenberg’s works tolerably well, and though a few of them remain distant from me, I feel my trust has been amply repaid—and I have always proceeded from the basis of the simple experience of listening for enjoyment. Technical minutiae interest me less than the spirit which inhabits a work, and its audible, apprehensible motions and forms.

This book, therefore, sets out in the same spirit to explain and popularize Schoenberg—to present some basic information about him, to survey his music, to delineate the principal issues, and to ask some questions. If I do not always answer the questions, that is because there are some answers which are only to be found in the music, and I should like to create a readiness in the reader to go to the music once he puts down the book. My desire was to write a plain and easy introduction to a less than easy figure: if I have not altogether succeeded that is partly because I prefer to acknowledge the difficulties which many people confess, and explain too much rather than too little.

The biographical section could not, in a book of this scope, make any pretence at completeness: instead it gives a fairly impressionistic account of the composer’s full and turbulent life, concentrated around certain salient events. For dramatic emphasis I have begun the story in the middle and only later sketched in the background. This is not meant to

confuse—the reader will find a chronological summary of Schoenberg's life in Appendix A. Indeed both the Calendar and Personalia contain some biographical information for which no room was found in the main text. I have taken grateful advantage of the 'Master Musicians' series format to avoid the customary discussion of Schoenberg's works in chronological sequence—which so easily lends itself to false emphasis and a concentration on selected 'milestones' in the development of his musical language. I have endeavoured, instead, to give some account of practically every work he composed; for many of his most interesting pieces are among the least known, and my impression is that even comparatively few 'Schoenbergians' have a complete picture of the richness and variety of the output, which points not in one direction, but in many. I have no taste for exclusivity. Inclusiveness is a function of love and subverts orthodoxy: if the reader might be tempted by a few words about the cabaret songs or the *Christmas Music*, I feel it my duty to give them space.

Even if, at the end, the reader *still* cannot muster any liking for Schoenberg, I hope something will have been learned, and for my part I shall continue to whistle Schoenberg's tunes whenever they come into my head. I have written this book because I am interested not in demigods or sacred monsters, but in a man and his music. I do not imagine he would have approved of it; but I am sanguine enough to hope I have done him no injustice.

Grateful acknowledgments are due to the following publishers for their kind permission to quote from Schoenberg's works: Belmont Music Publishers, Los Angeles (Exx. 9, 28, 42, 51); Boelke-Bomart, Inc., Hillsdale, N.Y. (Exx. 13, 19, 37); Bote & Bock, Berlin (Ex. 18); Edition Wilhelm Hansen, Copenhagen (Exx. 34, 41); Edition Peters, London (Exx. 6–7, 21, 38); G. Schirmer Inc., New York (Exx. 10, 23–7, 36); B. Schotts Söhne, Mainz (Exx. 11a, 50, 52–5); Nathaniel Shilkret Music Co., Inc., Malverne, Long Island, N.Y. (Ex. 28); and Universal Edition (London) Ltd (Exx. 1–5, 11b, 12, 14–17, 20, 22, 29–33, 35, 39–40, 42–9), to whom acknowledgment is also made for the use of photographs and passages from Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* and *Drei Satiren*. Extracts from *Arnold Schoenberg: Letters and Style and Idea* are made by kind permission of Faber & Faber, London and The St. Martin's Press, New York. Other

photographic illustrations by kind permission of Universal Edition AG (Vienna), the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, and Mrs Roberto Gerhard, who has also allowed me to use the quotations from her husband's writings.

Many people have helped me with this book; too many properly to thank in such a short space. I must, however, pay tribute to Robert Simpson, no 'Schoenbergian' himself, without whose kindness in bringing Messrs Dent and myself together in the first place the book might never have been written; and Ronald Stevenson, in whose company no one need lack for stimulating ideas, and whose interest, pertinent information and constructive suggestions have been most helpful. A special debt of gratitude is owed to O. W. Neighbour for allowing me access to Schoenberg's correspondence with Zemlinsky (passages from which are quoted in Chapters 3 and 8) and to his own article on Schoenberg for the forthcoming edition of *Grove*; also for the loan of material and for reading and commenting on my typescript at short notice. My thanks go to Sheila Stanton for drawing the music examples,¹ to Sigmund Laufer for assistance in translations, and to David Drew, Graham Hatton, Paul Rapoport, Derek Watson and Eric Walter White for loan of material. Among those who have read parts of the manuscript and suggested improvements, and those who have helped me simply by their interest and encouragement, their conversation or their hospitality, I thank Bernard Benoliel, Paul and Liz Chipchase, Ann Measures, Bruce Roberts, Mike and Ruth Smith, and Roger Williams.

London—Edinburgh—Cambridge 1972–5 M.M.

¹ The examples (and two additional ones) have been re-set for this new edition.

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Contents

List of Illustrations xxiii

I	Peripeteia (1908–13)	I
2	The Past (1874–1907)	24
3	Consolidation (1914–33)	54
4	In the Wilderness (1933–51)	73
5	Heart and Brain	88
6	Style	106
7	Choral Music	158
8	Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra	175
9	Chamber Music	201
10	Solo Keyboard Music	226
11	The Songs	235
12	Three Stage Works	253
13	Miscellany	265
14	Unfinished Torsos	274
15	...and Idea	289
	Epilogue	297

Appendices

A.	Calendar	301
B.	List of Works	327
C.	Personalia	336
D.	Bibliography	352

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Illustrations

Between pages 174 and 175

1. Arnold Schoenberg, Vienna, 1908 (Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna)
2. Schoenberg: a caricature by Hans Lindluff, 1913 (Austrian National Library)
3. Schoenberg and Zemlinsky at rehearsals for the first performance of *Erwartung*, Prague, 1924 cartoon by Emil Weiss (Austrian National Library)
4. Arnold Schoenberg in his Brentwood home, Los Angeles, 1948 with three of his paintings—two self-portraits and *Red Gaze* (Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna)
5. Schoenberg with Roberto Gerhard and Anton Webern in Barcelona, 1931 (Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna)
6. Schoenberg with his second wife, Gertrud, at St. Pere da Riba, Spain, summer 1931 (Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna)
7. A page from the manuscript of *Seraphita*, first of the Four Orchestra Songs, Op. 22 (Universal Edition, Vienna)
8. Arnold Schoenberg in Los Angeles, 1949 (Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna)
9. Arnold Schoenberg: Walking Self-Portrait, April 1911 (Belmont Music Publishers, Pacific Palisades; VBK, Vienna, 2006)

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*Peripeteia*

(1908–13)

Personally I had the feeling as if I had fallen into an ocean of boiling water, and not knowing how to swim or get out in another manner, I tried with my arms and legs as best I could . . . it burned not only my skin, it burned also internally.

—(Message to the American Institute
of Arts and Letters, 1947)

SCANDAL IN THE BÖSENDORFER SAAL!’ RAN THE VIENNA NEWS-paper headlines on 22nd December 1908, the morning after the famous Rosé Quarter, with one of the leading singers from the Court Opera, Marie Gutheil-Schoder, had given a recital in Ludwig Bösendorfer’s concert-hall. The ‘scandal’ was the reception accorded a new string quartet with voice by a thirty-four-year-old composer and teacher already notorious for outrageous modernism—Arnold Schoenberg.¹ The whistling on door-keys, jeers, catcalls, and angry confrontations between protestors and greatly outnumbered supporters were reported by the *Neue Wiener Tageblatt* in its ‘crime’ column, with the comment that the composer had ‘already created a public nuisance with others of his products. But he has never gone so far as he did yesterday . . . it sounded like a

¹ His name at this time and until 1933 was of course Schönberg; he adopted the anglicized form as soon as he settled in the USA, used it consistently afterwards, and is now most widely known by it.

convocation of cats'. Influential critics such as Ludwig Karpath and Max Kalbeck (the friend and biographer of Brahms) were loud in their condemnation of the new work. Though a few more temperate critical voices were raised, the 'review' of the event in the *Neue Wiener Abendblatt* typified the general response:

...anxious to make the acquaintance of the composer Arnold Schoenberg at last, we were completely cured by a String Quartet by that gentleman, allegedly in F sharp minor. ... The caterwauling turned what should have been an artistic event into an event of quite another nature, by provoking an unparalleled scandal; similarly, the composition is not an aesthetic but a pathological case. Out of respect for the composer we will assume that he is tone-deaf and thus musically *non compos*... otherwise the Quartet would have to be declared a public nuisance, and its author brought to trial by the Department of Health. We cannot imagine in what way the subscribers of the Rosé Quartet concerts had sinned, to cause the leader of that group to programme such a worthless assault on their ears. The members of the Quartet and Frau Gutheil-Schoder, who affixed to the fiddled abominations two sung ones with turgid texts by Stephan [*sic*] George, have been punished enough.²

The overworked terms of abuse tell us precisely nothing about the music. What was so objectionable? A less affronted critic actually commented that the Quartet sounded rather tame for a Schoenberg work. With its four relatively short, clear-textured movements, it was certainly more easily assimilable than the huge one-movement Quartet in D minor which had been heard—and almost as violently disliked—the previous year. What *was* unsettling, however, was the way in which it undermined the listener's basic assumptions about the stability of key: its unheard-of rapidity in modulation plunged the audience into a half-familiar yet unsettling world. Disturbances began when, by the sixth bar, the music had already reached the key of C—the most remote region from the F sharp in which it had begun (Ex. I).

The first movement was almost over-expressive, tense and feverish in character, with a strange air of unreality which momentary outbursts of

² Quoted in Ursula von Rauchhaupt (ed.), *Schoenberg, Berg, Webern. The String Quartets: a documentary study* (Hamburg, 1971), p. 145.

Ex. 1

Mässig (moderato) (♩ = c. 100)

etwas rascher (♩ = 120-126)

energy were unable to dispel. Then came an even more unsettling scherzo, half-scurrying, half-stumbling in gait, invaded at one point by a bizarre quotation from a well-known Viennese street-song, ‘O, du lieber Augustin, alles ist hin!’ (O, dear Augustin, it’s all over), on second violin:

Ex. 2

Längsamer

(sehr kurz)

Then in the dark and tragic slow movement ('Litany'), the soprano sang a highly emotional prayer for spiritual renewal in the depths of weariness (see Ex. 3).

Ex. 3

Tief ist die trau - er, die mich um dü - stert,
ein tret ich wie - der Herr! in dein Haus.

('Deep is the sorrow which now surrounds me, once more, Lord, I enter thy house')

The finale, 'Entrückung' (Rapture), opened with an instrumental prelude of uncanny, ethereal beauty, in which key-feeling was at last almost suspended. To new, free-floating harmonies, the soloist sang words destined to become famous in the history of twentieth-century music: 'I feel air blowing from another planet.'

Ex. 4

Quartet (con sord)
Vcl. 8va bassa
Voice
Ich füh - le luft von an - de - rem pla - ne - ten

And to many ears—nowadays at least—the music *does* float and soar as if suddenly lighter than air. There is a feeling of release, though release at a

price, as the poem tells of loss of self and union with God; a triumphant climax blazes at the words 'I am an ember of the Holy Fire, am but an echo of the Holy Voice'. The Quartet touches earth again, very gently, with an epilogue that resolves its tonal difficulties into a pure F sharp major.

Curiously this finale—'the first piece of atonal music', as it is sometimes inaccurately called³—was received in relative silence at the Bösendorfer Saal; something, at least, of its affirmative spirit must have communicated even to that resentful audience, however strange the language. In fact the Second Quartet embodies a very characteristic Schoenbergian emotional progression: the experience and exploration of fear, disorientation, near-despair; the cry for strength to endure these trials; and then fulfilment—awakening from the nightmare, the tortured self emerges into mental clarity, consolation, union with God. It is the first work in which this pattern appears unmistakably. Though still not a 'popular' piece, it has gradually been accepted by most listeners as a beautiful and vital one; an important stage in Schoenberg's own musical and spiritual development, and a crucial document in twentieth-century music.

Such things do not happen in a vacuum. The Second Quartet was born in unusual personal circumstances. When Schoenberg began sketching it early in 1907, he seems to have been temporarily unsure of his direction. In the previous few years his artistic development had been confident and astonishingly rapid—far too rapid for most listeners. Its climax was the highly compressed, affirmative First Chamber Symphony of 1906. He immediately began a Second Chamber Symphony: but somehow found progress less and less easy. A tendency towards ever livelier contrapuntal activity, ever more exhaustive interrelationship of every part, and ever-wider expansion of the limits of conventional tonality, naturally raised ever greater problems of musical mastery.

At the same time his personal position was equally difficult. The little money Schoenberg derived from teaching and hack-work for publishers could hardly support his wife and children, especially after the birth of his second child. Apart from a small, loyal circle of pupils and disciples, led

³ Atonal': a vulgarism in worldwide circulation as the acceptable term for 'music without key'. I do not introduce it again except to damn it further (see below, p. 72), preferring for Schoenberg's music of the years 1908–17 the at least descriptive phrase 'totally chromatic'. The finale of the String Quartet No. 2 is, in fact, centred on F sharp, with a strong contrary pull towards D.

by Alban Berg and Anton Webern, and close artistic friends, such as his brother-in-law Alexander von Zemlinsky and Gustav Mahler, Schoenberg was practically isolated: composition is a lonely and unromantic activity. Mahler's departure late in 1907 to assume the conductorship of the New York Philharmonic was a severe blow, robbing him of the presence and active support of the man and musician of acknowledged prestige whom he admired above all others.

During this period he began to feel the need to express himself through a second medium: that of paint and canvas. Perhaps there were some inspirations for which he could find no musical outlet. Certainly, like other artists of the period, he believed the immediacy and intensity of his ideas made it possible to embody them directly in any creative form. He lacked technical proficiency, however, and began taking lessons from a friend, the charming, highly strung young painter Richard Gerstl, a forerunner of the Austrian Expressionists, who had rejected the prevailing style of Art Nouveau. Although Schoenberg never became as adept as Gerstl, his brushwork and approach to portraiture do show the latter's influence.

Gerstl also painted portraits of various members of Schoenberg's circle and family, including his wife, Mathilde, who began to feel strongly attracted to the young artist (nine years her husband's junior). Gerstl joined the family on holiday in Gmunden on the Traunsee in the summer of 1907, and not long afterwards Schoenberg found out that he and Mathilde were having an affair. Although he forthwith forbade Mathilde to have anything more to do with Gerstl, Schoenberg himself seems to have had a powerful need of the young artist's companionship. He even accepted Gerstl setting up a studio in the same block in the Liechtensteinstrasse where the Schoenbergs had their flat. Here Mathilde, in secret defiance of her husband's orders, continued to visit him and act as his model. Matters seemed to have improved to the point where, in summer 1908, Gerstl again accompanied the Schoenbergs and Zemlinskys on holiday in Gmunden. But while there Schoenberg discovered they had continued their affair; and Mathilde, abandoning the children, eloped with Gerstl.⁴ Schoenberg, with his pupil Viktor Krüger as supporter and witness, pursued them to Vienna, but this time Mathilde refused to leave Gerstl.

⁴ For more detail on this Gmunden holiday see now Raymond Coffer, 'Betwixt the Hof- and the Volksoper: a Portrait of Zemlinsky in Gmunden, 1908' in *Zemlinsky Studies*, ed. Michael Frith (London, 2007).

Thus the Second String Quartet, partly composed in 1907, was completed during the summer of 1908, under the immediate shadow of this experience. Not only did Schoenberg dedicate the work ‘to my wife’ but—as one commentator⁵ has pointed out—the weird episode in the scherzo, where the second violin intones the street-song (‘it’s all over’), contains plentiful musical anagrams of the initials A.S. and the names Arnold, Mathilde, Richard, and Gerstl. During the same period he returned to the poetry of Stefan George, which had provided the texts for the Second Quartet. He now began a song-cycle (*Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*) in an even more tonally unstable style, to recent poems by George that trace the progress and final extinction of a love affair. George was predominantly homosexual but the poems Schoenberg chose reflected his only heterosexual affair. One cannot but wonder if Schoenberg was aware that the *innamorata* whom George addressed in these poems was the wife of Richard Dehmel—the poet who had inspired some of the finest of his own early works, above all the radiant sextet *Verklärte Nacht* composed with Mathilde in mind.

Worse was to come, as Schoenberg tried to persuade Mathilde to return to him. Anton Webern, of all his pupils the closest to his master, acted as an intermediary, begging her to come back, if only for the sake of their daughter and baby son. Eventually Mathilde gave in, agreeing to leave Gerstl and return to her husband. Early in October Gerstl burned some of his pictures and hanged himself, naked, before the full-length mirror he had used for his self-portraits. He was only twenty-five.

In view of the turn which Schoenberg’s creativity would shortly take, it is not prurient to rehearse this desperately unhappy story. Schoenberg’s feelings can only be imagined. He had tragically lost a friend in whom he had invested both his trust and some measure of emotional dependence; he had lost the central basis of his marriage; he seems nearly to have lost his old friendship with Zemlinsky, who naturally sympathized with his sister. In an undated ‘draft of a Testament’, plainly written about this time, Schoenberg records that he wept, that he himself contemplated suicide, that he was in total despair. Only a week after Gerstl’s suicide he sketched what would eventually become the beginning of an anguished symbolic music-drama, *Die glückliche Hand*. A man lies face down in the earth with a

⁵ Michael Graubart, in *Tempo* 111 (December 1974), pp. 47–8.

hyena-like monster on his back, its teeth in his neck. A half-hidden chorus comments on his predicament, including the words: 'Earthly happiness! You poor fool!'. These were the circumstances in which he brought *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* to its comfortless close; these too were the circumstances in which the Second String Quartet received its 'scandalous' première. It is a nice point whether the composer found keener irony in the vitriolic critical response to his music's painful beauty, or in the finale's now definitively refused prayer to be rapt away to another world, to renounce consciousness and become an ember of the holy fire.

It would, however, be impertinent, in the absence of information, to speculate on the character of the reconstituted marriage. Schoenberg, at the best of times, was plainly not an easy person to live with; nor was he, by nature, a particularly forgiving one. Unfortunately Mathilde Schoenberg, forever overshadowed by her forceful husband, remains a dim figure to biographers. She had, however, a strong will, and an active sexual appetite. The letters of Alban Berg seem to present her in her later years as something of a trouble-maker, taking at times an odd delight in fuelling her husband's explosive rages. Schoenberg's 'Berlin Diary' of 1912 shows she harboured a long resentment of Webern. But we should set this picture beside Schoenberg's own tributes to her memory after her death (see Chapter 3).

The first stages of the reunion were difficult enough on both sides. Mathilde was understandably deeply depressed and taciturn. The family moved out of the flat in the Leichtensteinstrasse, with its unhappy memories, and took up residence in the suburb of Hietzing. Schoenberg no doubt intended to make a new start, but the form it took must have startled even him, for he found himself suddenly in the grip of an emotional and creative upsurge of daunting intensity. The year 1909 was musically decisive for him: at furious speed he composed a succession of works which drove deeper and deeper into perilous regions of feeling and language. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that they were a direct creative response to the events of 1908.

He had always composed quickly, trusting to inspiration and the rightness of his inner ear, but never so fast as in the few short months which brought forth *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, the Three Piano Pieces Op. 11, and the Five Orchestral Pieces Op. 16. To judge from a letter he wrote to Richard Strauss, offering the Orchestral Pieces to Strauss to conduct, he now felt that his music was drawing close to the principles of contemporary painting.

He described the pieces he had completed so far as ‘absolutely not symphonic, quite the opposite—without architecture, without structure. Only an ever-changing, unbroken succession of colours, rhythms and moods’. Commentators nowadays do not find this music ‘formless’, but the forms were certainly new, freer and more intuitive than anything written before. Much more than the Second Quartet, the works of 1909 give the impression of rendering troubled psychological states directly in sound.

This was indeed Schoenberg’s intention, as he intimated in correspondence with the painter Wassily Kandinsky. ‘Art belongs to the *unconscious*! One must express *oneself*! Express oneself *directly*!’ It is significant that there seem to have been very few sketches for these extraordinary works. Writing at furious speed, under the impress of powerful emotion, he had arrived at the conviction that music could become the gateway to the unconscious mind, and that it was his mission to transcribe the inner life: the more irrational and intuitive the transcription, the more faithful and immediate it would be. During this period he immersed himself in the study of the writings of August Strindberg, whose self-analysis, extreme subjectivity, and consciousness of the fleeting and contradictory nature of existence were embodied in such revolutionary stage works as the 1901 *Dream-Play*. In the summer of 1909 Schoenberg was in frequent correspondence with Ferruccio Busoni, who had taken sufficient interest in the second of the op. 11 piano pieces to attempt an arrangement of it—a ‘concert interpretation’ of music which the great pianist-composer suspected would be too rebarbative for audiences. In one letter Schoenberg outlined his expressive aims in a kind of revolutionary *credo*, so remarkable as to be worth quoting *in extenso*.

I strive for: complete liberation from all forms
from all symbols of cohesion and of logic.

Thus:
away with ‘motivic working out’.
Away with harmony as
cement or bricks of a building.

Harmony is *expression*
and nothing else.

Then:
Away with Pathos!

Away with protracted ten-ton scores, from erected or constructed towers, rocks and other massive claptrap.

My music must be / *brief*.

Concise! In two notes: not built, but ‘*expressed*’!!

And the results I wish for:

No stylized and sterile protracted emotion.

People are not like that:

It is *impossible* for a person to have only *one* sensation at a time.

One has *thousands* simultaneously. And these thousands can no more readily be added together than an apple and a pear. They go their own ways.

And this variegation, this multifariousness, this *illogicality* which our senses demonstrate, the illogicality presented by their interactions, set forth by some mounting rush of blood, by some reaction of the senses or the nerves, this I should like to have in my music.

It should be an expression of feeling, as our feelings, which bring us in contact with our subconscious, really are, and no false child of feelings and ‘conscious logic’.

Now I have made my confession and they can burn me . . . ⁶

It was an extreme position, from which—in time—he would have to find his way back into conscious compositional strategies. But even when he had done so he never wholly renounced this conviction that the work of art essentially bodies forth the underlying forces of the unconscious.

Schoenberg’s approach to Strauss over the *Orchestral Pieces* was unsuccessful. The older man had supported him seven years before, but his interest in Schoenberg was rapidly cooling. Though his letters remained cordial, he remarked to Alma Mahler in private that he believed Schoenberg could only be helped by a psychiatrist—and would be better off shovelling snow (traditionally the most menial of tasks) than scribbling on music-paper. Alma had no compunction in reporting the comment to Schoenberg, and his relations with Strauss were abruptly and bitterly terminated. He did, however, have one stroke of good fortune at this time. The comparatively new Viennese music publishing house of Universal Edition (UE), which had begun by printing editions of the classics

⁶ Letter written at Steinakirchen am Forst, undated but postmarked 13 or 18 August 1909, in *Ferruccio Busoni. Selected Letters*, translated and edited by Antony Beaumont (London, 1987), p.389.

but had acquired the rights to works by several contemporary composers including Strauss, had in 1907 appointed a go-ahead director, Emil Hertzka, who was determined to make the firm the premier publisher of new music. UE now offered general contracts to three of Vienna's most prominent composers—Gustav Mahler, Franz Schreker, and Arnold Schoenberg. (Significantly, there was no such offer to Zemlinsky.) In its way it was recognition of the position Schoenberg now occupied in the consciousness of the musically discerning, and UE would be his principal, though by no means only, publisher for the next quarter-century.

The last work he produced in 1909 was the most astonishing of all. Schoenberg spent the summer holidays of that year at Steinakirchen in lower Austria, with the Zemlinskys, Erwin Stein, and others. It was now that he completed the final numbers of the Op. 11 Piano Pieces and the Op. 16 Orchestral Pieces. For a short time they were joined by Marie Pappenheim, a distant relative of Zemlinsky—a young physician who had also published poetry. Schoenberg asked her to write him an opera libretto, and within three weeks she produced and sent him an extraordinary, dream-like, *angst*-ridden melodrama *Erwartung* (Expectation). She considered the text only a draft, but apparently it conformed so perfectly with what Schoenberg wanted that he began to compose the music immediately, merely deleting certain passages that did not answer to his needs.

Pappenheim was familiar with Freud's theories of hysteria and repression (indeed she was a relative of Berta Pappenheim, who had suffered from hysteria and under the pseudonym 'Anna O' had been the subject of the first notable psychoanalytic case-history, outlined in the 1885 *Studien über Hysterie* by Freud and Josef Breuer). Her libretto, in its original form, is almost a realistic study of hysterical symptoms, from a proto-feminist viewpoint. The sole protagonist, an unnamed woman, wanders through a forest, seeking her lover. She finds only his corpse. She may have killed him herself, or the whole thing may be an hallucination of her disordered mind. In fact Pappenheim's draft made it explicit that the protagonist had shot the man for betraying her with another woman; but Schoenberg suppressed this crucial passage, apparently to increase the sense of dream-like uncertainty and to concentrate on the character's seething, contradictory emotions to the exclusion of other factors. The text's potent mixture of lonely, feverish searching,

searing guilt, erotic despair, hysteria, and death were clearly what most concerned him: the idea of a human being in an extreme state, driven beyond the edge of sanity.

He composed the entire work—a ‘monodrama’ for soprano and large orchestra, intended for the stage although it works equally well in the concert hall—in the incredibly short space of seventeen days. Over half an hour’s music, more tightly packed with more extreme invention than ever before, embodies and underscores the emotional tumult laid bare by the lone woman’s broken sentences. If ever the metaphor was applicable, this was composition at a white-hot pace; and it took him only three weeks more to score the whole monodrama for very large orchestra, in an instrumental style of dazzling and unprecedented virtuosity.

Erwartung would have to wait fifteen years for its first performance. Beside it, the ‘scandalous’ Second Quartet appears a gentle, straightforward piece in a familiar, traditional style. Yet almost certainly they chart different aspects of the same experience. In all the works of 1909 (as well as the shorter, slightly more ‘objective’ near-monodrama *Die glückliche Hand*, which he returned to in earnest in 1910) Schoenberg was revolutionizing his own musical language not just because of the logic of his technical development, but because he was driven to work out his responses to his own emotional and spiritual turmoil. It was, in every sense, a personal crisis, which he mastered by transforming it into music: one reason why these works have such a powerfully disturbing effect even today.

Early in 1910, in Berlin, he was able to present some of his recent output—the world premieres of the Op. 11 Piano Pieces, played by Etta Werndorf, and of the Stefan George cycle *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, sung by Martha Winternitz-Dorda to Werndorf’s accompaniment—as part of an all-Schoenberg concert in the Ehrbar Hall which also included portions of the *Gurrelieder*, largely composed as long ago as 1900 and still not completed in its full, orchestral form. For this his cousin Hans Nachod sang the tenor to Winternitz-Dorda’s soprano. Schoenberg provided a short but trenchant programme-note which reads, in part:

I began composing the *Gurrelieder* in 1900, the Lieder after George and the piano pieces 1908. The interval that lies between them perhaps justifies the great difference in style . . .

With the George songs I have for the first time succeeded in approaching an ideal of expression and form which has been in my mind for years. Until now, I lacked the strength and confidence to make it a reality. But now that I have set out along this path once and for all, I am conscious of having broken through every restriction of a bygone aesthetic; and though the goal towards which I am striving appears to me a certain one, I am, nonetheless, already feeling the resistance I shall have to overcome: I feel that even the least of temperaments will rise in revolt, and suspect that even those who have so far believed in me will not want to acknowledge the necessary nature of this development.

So it seemed a good thing to point out, by performing the *Gurrelieder*—which years ago were friendless, but today have friends enough—that I am being forced in this direction not because my invention or technique is inadequate, nor because I am uninformed about all the other things the prevailing aesthetics demand, but that I am obeying an inner compulsion, which is stronger than my upbringing: that I am obeying the formative process which, being natural to me, is stronger than my artistic education.

However, the ‘inner compulsion’ seemed to be relaxing its grip. The effort of creating *Erwartung* seems to have produced a reaction, and for almost a year Schoenberg found it very difficult to compose. Instead, encouraged by hearing the *Gurrelieder* songs, he took up, after a long interval, the orchestration of his early masterpiece. He plunged into the writing of his massive harmony text-book, *Harmonielehre*, which he had been planning since around 1899. He also started to paint much more. Several of his best-known paintings date from 1910. The various ‘Visions’ and ‘Gazes’ seem to share the uncanny ethos of his recent musical works—disembodied portraits of Christ, or Mahler, or nameless beings with enigmatic stares, denizens of some haunted dream-world. They are mostly, in the opinion of experts, clumsily done: but they radiate an almost frightening emotional intensity, a sense of acute distress.

While engaged on these paintings he offered his talents for hire as a portrait-painter, for his financial position was getting steadily worse. He applied for a professorship of composition at the Vienna Academy of Music and Fine Arts, but accepted instead the much lowlier position of *privatdozent* (outside lecturer), which did not carry a regular salary. Mahler, who returned to Austria in the summer to compose his

Tenth Symphony, supported Schoenberg's application in the warmest terms, describing him as 'one of those fiery spirits—of the kind bound to provoke opposition but just as certainly to add life and set things in motion'. But in August, when Mahler's own marriage was going through its severest crisis, Schoenberg was forced to write him a desperate letter:

I can scarcely tell you how awful it is for me to have to write this letter to you, of all people. But you cannot imagine what impossible things I have tried, but also what possible things, and it was all no use. . . . The fact is that I have no money and have to pay the rent. . . . I cannot tell you how unhappy it makes me to tarnish my relationship with you by bringing up such a matter. And I must say: I should not have done it on my own behalf; I can get over such a thing all right. But when one has a wife and children one is no longer the only person who counts. . . . (Letter 264)⁷

The appeal did not go unanswered, and two days later Schoenberg could write a letter of heartfelt thanks. Apologizing if he seemed over-effusive, he concluded with a comment that gives a significant clue to all his creative activity of the period: 'Extravagant emotion is the fever that purges the soul of impurity. And it is my ambition to become as pure as yourself, since it is not permitted to me to be so great' (Letter 265).

Guido Adler, the Academy's Professor of Music Theory, who had consistently supported Schoenberg, helped by giving him editorial work. But it was clear that he could not go on living in this hand-to-mouth fashion. The lecture fees from the Academy were far too little on which to support his family, and public recognition as a composer was still denied him in his native city—this although the noted critic Richard Specht, writing in the *Weiner Allgemeine Zeitung* in December 1910, had listed Zemlinsky and Schoenberg as the most important of the younger generation of Viennese composers. Elsewhere, however, his reputation was growing; and after his symphonic poem *Pelleas und Melisande* received a highly successful performance in Berlin in October 1910, his thoughts began to turn in that direction.

⁷ Arnold Schoenberg, *Letters*, a selection edited by Erwin Stein, translated by Ernst Kaiser and Ethne Wilkins (London, 1964). Citations of letters followed by a number refer to this edition throughout.

Events in 1911 helped impel him to such a move: above all the fact that, in May, Mahler returned to Vienna, dying of severe streptococcal blood infection. In his last rational hours the great man worried about what would happen to Schoenberg now—'If I go, he will have nobody left'. At midnight on 18 May, during a thunderstorm, his turbulent and unhappy life came to an end. Three days later Schoenberg attended the funeral. Less than a month later, as if in recollection of this event, he wrote last and saddest of his *Six Little Piano Pieces*, Op. 19, with its melancholy alternation of two chords, like distant tolling bells. Mahler had once told him he should compose into his music the funeral bells that so disturbed him at the Leichtensteinstrasse—perhaps only now could Schoenberg follow his advice. The *Harmonielehre*, completed in July, was dedicated to Mahler's memory.

Soon afterwards Schoenberg and his family left Vienna—'the City of Songs by Murdered Artists', as he described it in a letter to Guido Adler—to try his luck in Berlin as he had done a decade before. It was no smooth transition. The final straw that forced them to abandon the Hietzing flat was a nasty imbroglio with a neighbour, an engineer, who assailed them with anti-Semitic abuse after Schoenberg intervened in a dispute with another neighbour and claimed that the nine-year-old Gertrude was making sexual advances to his sons (almost certainly it was the other way around). In the face of such threats the family spent from July to September stranded, penniless, in Bavaria, sheltering on the Starnberger See with the Zemlinskys. (Mathilde's brother was conducting an operetta festival in nearby Munich.) Mathilde was ill with a mild form of pneumonia, and Gertrude had contracted a skin condition associated with anaemia and malnutrition.

Eventually in late September Schoenberg managed to reach Berlin and find some monetary support, as well as lodgings for himself and his family in the south-western suburb of Zehlendorf. From October until May 1913 they dwelt in comparative comfort at the Villa Lepke, a sizeable house on the Machnower Chaussee with access to a park and a large pond. The Munich episode was not without benefit, however: he met the painters Wassily Kandinsky (with whom he had already been in correspondence), Gabriele Münter and Franz Marc at Murnau, and three of his paintings were accepted for inclusion in the first *Blaue Reiter* Exhibition—the second great showing of Expressionist Art, which opened

in December and subsequently toured Germany. He also contributed an essay to the famous *Blaue Reiter* Almanac, and his new song *Herzgewächse* was reproduced there in facsimile. Shortly afterwards Paris von Gütersloh, whom Schoenberg had known in Berlin ten years before, arranged for twenty-three of his paintings to be featured in an exhibition of modern art in Budapest.

In Berlin his circumstances improved. Ten years before he had taught at the Stern Conservatoire: now again he found teaching work there, giving a series of lectures on 'Aesthetics and the Theory of Composition'. Schoenberg spoke quite extemporaneously. As his English pupil Edward Clark recalled, he

never prepared the wording of his lectures in advance, and never stood on a podium. He would go back and forth between the rows of seats, smoked the whole time, expressing his views about his experiences and theoretical procedures in musical composition, and answered questions.

The lectures were poorly attended, but keenly interested those who came to hear him. During a lecture in December Schoenberg found himself in heated argument with the painter Emil Nolde, who later excused himself for his outspokenness.

Webern, who had followed Schoenberg to Berlin, assisted him in the lectures; in Vienna the faithful Berg acted as his eyes and ears, and was his agent in many professional and personal matters. At long last, Schoenberg was able to complete the *Gurrelieder*, the huge cantata whose scoring he had abandoned nine years before, and gained new composition pupils, notably the aforementioned Edward Clark, from Newcastle, and the pianist Eduard Steuermann. The latter was recommended by Busoni, who was already Steuermann's piano teacher. As we have already seen, the two composers had corresponded over the years, and Busoni had assisted Schoenberg's move to Berlin.

At best their relations were marked by a reserved cordiality. Despite Busoni's large-minded tolerance, their artistic aims were far apart; Schoenberg was privately (and unfairly) contemptuous of some elements of Busoni's musicianship. But he was grateful for the older composer's interest and genuine desire to help, and confessed himself deeply moved ('I have done him an injustice') when he heard Busoni's orchestral *Berceuse élégiaque*. One fruit of their association was a recital of Schoenberg's

music given in Berlin's Harmoniumsaal in early 1912, with three of the *Five Orchestral Pieces* performed in an eight-hand piano arrangement by pupils of Schoenberg and Busoni. The latter contributed a sympathetic, impressionistic review of the occasion to the periodical *Pan*:

Seated at the two keyboards, four men with refined, characteristic heads; almost touching, to see how they place their young intellects at the service of what is still inexplicable, with devotion and efficiency. At the back of the small podium two eyes glimmer restlessly, and a baton makes short, nervous movements. One sees only Schoenberg's head and hand, communicating with his four champions, infecting them more and more with his own fever. An unusual picture which, together with the unusual sound, exerts its own fascination. In any case, different from that of a sonata-evening by two royal professors.⁸

To judge by eyewitness accounts of the Schoenberg household that winter—the composer holding forth to his guests, Mathilde listening, comfortably wrapped in a shawl, on the sofa, the children running about—the marriage had regained a certain stability. In a letter to Alban Berg, written in late November 1911, Webern mentions that 'Schoenberg once said to me that there is in addition, or perhaps on the whole, a very different sort of love other than the passion sanctioned by literature'—one that was 'quiet, above all sweet, charming'. He may have been speaking of his view of how his marriage was reconstituted.

Schoenberg was restless to begin new works, but in a less fevered spirit than before. It was now that the actress Albertine Zehme sent him a text—Otto Erich Hartleben's translation of Albert Giraud's poetic cycle 'Pierrot Lunaire'—and a commission to compose music to which it could be recited. This was precisely the stimulus Schoenberg needed. A twenty-one number cycle, for *Sprechstimme* (pitched speaking voice) and an ensemble of five players handling eight instruments was set down in a very short space of time—most of the numbers took a single day each to write. 'I know now where it comes from,' he wrote in a diary as the work began to emerge. 'Spring is always my best time. Once more I feel ready for the motion inside me. In this I'm almost like a plant. Every year the same. In the spring of the year I have to compose something'.

⁸ Ferruccio Busoni, 'Schönberg Matinée', as translated by Leo Black in Willi Reich, *Schoenberg: a critical biography* (London, 1971), p. 64.

Pierrot Lunaire is really an ironic epilogue to all his works composed since 1907. Pierrot, the violent, moonstruck clown of Bergamo, is partly a minor bogeyman of the Expressionist vision, partly a parody of the artist helpless in the grip of that vision. The verses, for all their surface *fin-de-siècle* decadence, are tightly organized, and so are the miniature forms of Schoenberg's settings. In this sense it is the most 'classical' music he had written for several years, and its bizarre humour and fleeting beauty (which does not exclude the awareness of pain) suggest that he was now able to view his own upheavals in a more detached, sardonic perspective. It is not the music of a madman, as was often the criticism in the first few years of its existence, but the work of a very sane one who knows he may have been near madness. This is one reason why the final number ('O ancient scent of far-off days'), which ends the 'moonlit' melodrama in daylight with something curiously like traditional E major tonality, can still seem so moving. The bad dream is over, and we breathe again a morning air which, nevertheless, is not quite the air of yesterday—the 'other planets' still float overhead.

After a private performance at Busoni's house early in October, before a select audience that included the young Edgard Varèse, Schoenberg himself conducted the first public performance in Berlin later that month, at which Albertine Zehme wore a Columbine costume and the specially trained ensemble (who had been coached through more than forty rehearsals) was hidden behind dark screens. Igor Stravinsky was among those invited to the final rehearsals and was bowled over by the instrumentation of the new work; he also visited Schoenberg at Zehlendorf and their relations, at that time, were quite friendly. During the next year Schoenberg toured with his performers throughout Germany and Austria, sharing the conducting with the young Hermann Scherchen, who now became a convert to his music. *Pierrot Lunaire* was anathema to the critics—but, for once, a success with the public; and ever since, despite its curious ensemble, great technical demands, and uncomfortably ambiguous character, it has remained one of Schoenberg's most frequently performed works.

With its completion, he seems to have felt able to direct his imagination outwards again, to see his struggles in the perspective of humanity at large. Thus Schoenberg, whose output contains no large-scale orchestral symphony (though the two 'chamber symphonies'—the second

of these had lain unfinished since 1908—may be seen as a radical critique of late-Romantic symphonism), spent much of the period 1912–14 sketching possibly the most gigantic symphony ever conceived. Following the tendency already observable in *Die glückliche Hand*, this was a much more strictly ‘worked’ conception than the works of 1908–9. Indeed it was perhaps the most ambitious project of his career: a Choral Symphony, for soli, choruses, and immense orchestra (leaving aside the percussion complement, Schoenberg anticipated requiring ten to twelve each of flutes, oboes, and bassoons, twelve to sixteen clarinets, twelve horns, twelve tubas, twenty desks of violins, and the rest of the strings in proportion). The five-movement work, beside which even Mahler’s Eighth, the so-called *Symphony of a Thousand*, would have appeared quite modest in its requirements, was intended to last a whole evening. It was to reflect Schoenberg’s own religious beliefs and spiritual struggles—much influenced by Swedenborg, Balzac, and Strindberg, but set in the widest possible context of humanity at large: about how contemporary, atheistical man struggles with God until he finally arrives at the point of accepting Him. (‘How to learn to pray!’ as Schoenberg put it in a letter about the work to the poet Richard Dehmel.) The Choral Symphony’s first movement was to depict ‘A Change of Life (looking backwards, looking to the future)’; a scherzo on the grandest scale was to depict ‘The Joy of Life’; there were to be settings of poems by Dehmel and by Rabindranath Tagore, passages from the Bible, a critique of the bourgeois idea of God, a setting of Schoenberg’s own poem *Totentanz der Prinzipien* (‘The Death-Dance of the Principles’); and, finally, a movement depicting ‘the union of objective, sceptical consciousness of reality with faith’. Schoenberg could find no suitable text for this last movement, and he invited Dehmel to provide one. However, the poet declined, so eventually he determined to provide his own.

Meanwhile his fame was still spreading. A group of his students published a symposium about him, *Arnold Schönberg in höchster Verehrung* (‘Arnold Schoenberg in highest admiration’), jointly edited by Karl Linke and Alban Berg, with essays not only by themselves but by the artists Kandinsky and Guterslöh. (In the diary he was keeping at the time Schoenberg registered his pride and feeling of being overwhelmed by such love for him, but also that ‘... I am being talked about in really much too effusive a way. I am too young for this kind of praise, have

accomplished too little and too little that is perfect.’) He visited Prague (where Zemlinsky was now in charge of the New German Theatre) twice in 1912, to conduct *Pelleas und Melisande* and to give a lecture in memory of Mahler that was astonishing in its impassioned, hyperbolic tone. He conducted *Pelleas* again in Amsterdam and St Petersburg, where it was well received; while in London, Henry Wood gave the world premiere of the *Five Orchestral Pieces* to an astonished Queen’s Hall audience at the Proms. ‘Not a single soul in the hall could have understood it at first hearing’, declared *The Times*. ‘The music was akin to the complaints of a martyred soul and reminded one of nothing more than the crazy delusions of delirium or the terrible fears of a hyper-nervous infant’, sniffed *The Globe*. But the *Daily Telegraph* was not so sure:

One felt, however, that there is a lot of deliberate logic in these pieces—solutions, in fact, that were stimulating, not to say surprising. . . . It is music well put together; form and contrast—two big things—are there, ‘ugliness’ galore, ‘beauty’ starved to death, sheer technical skill unsurpassed. And one may find in it, too, a certain humour and tenderness, and (at times) a certain hardness that are, after all, not so very far removed from life. It is a true ‘human document’, bewildering enough, it is true, but human, and intensely personal to the writer himself.⁹

Many years later, paying tribute to Wood’s ‘great artistic and personal courage’ in arranging this performance, Schoenberg recalled with some amusement his first experience of London orchestras:

Struggling with the little English I had been taught at school, I had tremendous difficulties to present my ideas, demands or suggestions to the orchestra. I have today a fairly correct idea how funny my pronunciation must have sounded at that time. In recollection I still hear myself addressing the orchestra: ‘Bliss, tchentlemen, nember fifffe’, whereupon Sir Henry Wood in his softest *dolcissimo con sordino*, with the most delicate pronunciation of the ‘G’ and the ‘V’, and a long extended ‘I’ would repeat: ‘Please, gentlemen, number fi-eve.’ Though I understood the lesson and appreciated the fine manner in which it was given, I could not profit from it at once. There was a passage of fast notes to be played by six horns. It was tremendously

⁹ ‘Promenade Concerts. New Work Hissed’, unsigned review, *Daily Telegraph*, 4 September 1912.

difficult because of some intricate intervals, and in spite of repeating it over and over it never came out faultlessly. In desperation I turned to Mr Wood: 'This should perhaps be played by eight horns.' 'My God, no; there would only be more false notes,' he replied and we both laughed heartily.¹⁰

The Orchestral Pieces had begun to make their way in the world: they received a repeat performance in London and another in Amsterdam. After the latter Henri Hinrichsen, head of the publishing firm of Peters Edition who had taken the considerable risk of publishing the work in 1911, sent Schoenberg a friendly letter enclosing an extra honorarium. In his reply the composer, who rarely received such disinterested generosity, expressed his pleasure and gratitude. He quoted the lines from 'Entrückung' which he had set to music in the Second String Quartet, about wishing to become an ember of the holy fire:

I want to tell all people who want to believe it, about the holy fire. . . . I would like to wish that one could see something in me: the thing which I strive for: *to be a sounding expression of the human soul and its longing for God.*¹¹

Four months later Mathilde's mother, Clara, who had been living with the Schoenbergs since shortly after their arrival in Berlin (she had also lived with them in Vienna), died. Mathilde was desolated by this new blow. Schoenberg therefore took the family on holiday for several weeks with the Zemlinskys at Karlshagen, a seaside resort on the Baltic. To Kandinsky he wrote that he had spent the summer 'in tranquil mindlessness', contemplating an oratorio on Balzac's novel *Seraphita*. But it was not an easy time. The friendship between Schoenberg and Zemlinsky had been under strain since the events of 1908, and by the end of the vacation they were unable to exchange a civil word. From this low point there was a reconciliation, however, which was solemnized by Zemlinsky's dedication to Schoenberg of his own Second String Quartet, one of his greatest works, composed in 1913–15. Zemlinsky's biographer

¹⁰ From a contribution by Schoenberg for *Homage to Henry Wood, a World Symposium* (L.P.O. Booklets No. 1, London, 1944), edited by Miron Grindea; reproduced with Mr Grindea's permission. The anecdote, however, does not refer to the Proms premiere of Op. 16 but the second British performance, in January 1914, which Schoenberg himself came to London to conduct at Wood's invitation.

¹¹ Irene Lawford-Hinrichsen, *Music Publishing and Patronage. CF Peters: 1800 to the Holocaust* (Kenton, 2000), p. 150.

has ingeniously but plausibly suggested that this passionate and ultimately redemptive score is a meditation on the tragedies and tensions of the past few years, with Schoenberg, Mathilde, himself, and even Richard Gerstl sublimated into purely musical but still identifiable characters:

The dominant voice is often that of the cello, which runs hysterically through the registers, raises its voice as if to shout others down, asserts itself as melody and bass line at once, obdurately insists on pedal points. . . . At such moments the personality of the dedicatee—himself a cellist—rises unambiguously to the surface.¹²

At any event the Baltic holiday seems to have given Schoenberg the strength to return to the fray in composition and performance. Early in 1913 he experienced his greatest public triumph—and in Vienna. On 23 February he was present at the first performance, thirteen years after its inception, of the *Gurrelieder*. His cousin, Hans Nachod, created the most important role, that of King Waldemar. Other soloists included Martha Winternitz-Dorda as Tove, Marya Freund as the Wood-Dove, and Alfred Boruttau as Klaus the Fool. The Philharmonic Chorus, Vienna Kaufmännischer Gesangverein and the Vienna Tonkünstler Orchestra were conducted by Franz Schreker, who (with Alban Berg's assistance, since Schoenberg was in Berlin) had guided the enormous forces through a very trying rehearsal period. Schoenberg's circle tended to think Schreker had insisted on going ahead despite mounting difficulties mainly to earn himself personal glory at the expense of the work; but the final result surely justified his efforts.

Many Viennese came to jeer at the latest manifestation of Schoenberg's crazy music, bringing their house-keys to whistle louder with. They stayed spellbound. Schoenberg's gigantic early masterpiece, from whose expansive romantic lyricism and brave pantheistic faith in the essential rightness of natural order he must by now have felt impossibly far removed, disarmed all scoffers. This was music they understood! When—after the long Wagnerian love-tragedy had been enacted, the wild ride of the ghostly hunters sent on its way, and the Summer Wind's riotous breezes invoked by the speaker—the music gained the blazing C major that opens the final Hymn to the Sun—then the entire audience, in a kind

¹² Antony Beaumont, *Zemlinsky* (London, 2000), pp. 229–30.

of dumbfounded concession to their own astonishment, rose to their feet and remained standing for the last five grandiose minutes.

It was a magnificent success. There was tumultuous applause, and rapturous shouts of ‘Schoenberg! Schoenberg!’. The composer was eventually discovered sitting grimly in an inconspicuous seat, and very unwillingly was led on stage. There he bowed to Schreker and the performers, but pointedly ignored the audience that was applauding him so enthusiastically. ‘For years,’ he said afterwards, ‘these people have refused to recognize me. Why should I thank them for appreciating me now?’ A graceless attitude, no doubt, but he had good reason to be bitter. Shortly before the performance, the father of an early pupil, pursuing a debt which Schoenberg understood to have been paid on his behalf by the pupil long ago, sent bailiffs to seize his personal effects and deprive him of part of the money for his return fare. To get back to Berlin after the concert, he had to borrow from friends.

Nor was the acclamation anything but a passing mood. Within a few weeks his music and that of his associates was greeted with a barracking even worse than anything that had greeted the Second Quartet in the Bösendorfersaal. On 31 March he conducted a concert at the Musikvereinsaal, promoted by the Akademischer Verband für Literatur und Musik (the Academic Union for Literature and Music), in a programme of his personal choice, largely designed to allow his pupils Berg and Webern to hear their music played. Despite some protests, his own Chamber Symphony, Zemlinsky’s Maeterlinck Songs, and even Webern’s Op.6 Orchestral Pieces were successfully performed. But two of Berg’s *Altenberg-Lieder* provoked such uproar and fighting among the audience that the concert had to be abandoned. Some of the demonstrators afterwards marched to a police station and later attempted to pursue some of Schoenberg’s supporters through the courts. It was a famous Viennese musical ‘*skandal*’; it adversely affected the reputation of the Akademischer Verband, and indirectly led to its being wound up the following year.



The Past

(1874–1907)

...our loathed and beloved Vienna

—(Schoenberg to Mahler, 1910)

THE VIENNA INTO WHICH SCHOENBERG WAS BORN, AND WHICH so readily abused him, enclosed a society of unsettling paradoxes. Time has since rubbed smooth its rough edges and bestowed a lustre that in some respects the city really deserved—glittering capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, cultural and commercial crossroads: the prosperous, stable, easy-going, infinitely leisured high-summer realm of the log king Franz Joseph I and the waltz king Johann Strauss II. Yet the colourful surface often concealed disillusionment and despair, and the crosscurrents of social tension, burgeoning anti-Semitism and political and intellectual ferment. Since the Austro-Prussian War had firmly demoted Austria from its position of European political predominance, Viennese society had become hamstrung by an inert, paternalistic bureaucracy whose incapacity, moral hypocrisy, and political corruption became progressively more evident as the nineteenth century drew to a close. As that society's collapse began to seem possible, and so less possible to contemplate, so did attitudes harden against new ideas. Yet the ambiguous city exercised an uncanny fascination on even its most mistreated sons.

In artistic circles there was a gradually heightening awareness of social stagnation, of all-pervasive double standards in life and thought, and a

sense of imminent disintegration, vividly recalled for a later generation in the essays and stories of Stefan Zweig and the novels of Robert Musil. At the time, this mode of awareness was summed up for many by the remarkable group of creative artists of the *fin-de-siècle* centred around the painter Gustav Klimt and the dramatist Arthur Schnitzler, both of whom were much patronized and highly successful in their chosen fields; and in music most powerfully by Gustav Mahler, who was artistic director of the Imperial Opera from 1897. Other leading figures included the artists of the Vienna Secession, the writers of the *Jung Wien* movement, the poet and dramatist Hugo von Hofmannsthal and one of Schoenberg's friends, the novelist and playwright Hermann Bahr. Aware of their powerlessness to change a society which, on the whole, rewarded them and regarded them as heralds of a new age even as it found their works shocking or provocative, these creators responded to the situation with a melancholy masked in more or less bitter scepticism, a concentration on brilliant surface ornament, and an aesthetic stance that glorified art for art's own sake.

In opposition to them there soon emerged a second group, centred around the writer and *Kultur-kritik* Karl Kraus and the architect Adolf Loos.¹ They saw nothing fundamentally new in the *fin-de-siècle* ethos, merely a continuation in changed guise of what Schoenberg used to call the '*Ach so blumenreiche Romantik*' (the oh-so-flowery Romanticism). They tried rather to combat the situation with a positive but inevitably abrasive view of art as a means of moral change, ethical rather than aesthetic, founded on the traditions, both exhortatory and satirical, of European humanism. This group's efforts drove them, during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth, into an extreme position where, if their various arts were to continue to have validity, a radical rethinking of their fundamental principles was vitally necessary. Their attitude was not escapist, but a response to social pressure, and might be summed up in the belief that a determined critique of the idioms in which a society expresses itself is a critique of the society itself. They saw turn-of-the-century Vienna's predilection for *Schmuck*

¹ As Leon Botstein has observed, there were significant figures in Viennese culture who were independent of either group, or partially accepted by both: Sigmund Freud, Viktor Adler, Theodor Herzl, and Otto Wagner, among others. As his music developed, Mahler, too, came to occupy a more independent position.

(ornament, decorative effect) and cliché as concealing a real poverty of life, thought, and artistic substance.

Necessity and intensity were their driving principles. For Karl Kraus, language itself had to be purified, as the only medium capable of arriving at the truth. For Adolf Loos—notorious, in a Vienna infested with buildings that flaunted decorative facades and swirling neo-Rococo adornment, for a purely functional approach of severe lines and harmonious proportion—architecture had to return to the strictly necessary, to become a purely functional art of structure rather than ornament. His influential article *Ornament und Verbrechen* (Ornament and Crime, 1908) attacked the florid Art Nouveau style and called for a return to classicism, making somewhat tendentious use of anthropological evidence to suggest that the more advanced a civilization, the more it renounces unnecessary decoration. Kraus's self-edited and largely self-written periodical *Die Fackel* (The Torch) set the group's agenda. Under its broad banner, if no other, we may link the names of the painter-dramatist Oskar Kokoschka, the poet Peter Altenberg, the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, the painter Egon Schiele—and the composer Arnold Schoenberg. His art, too, would be created out of a driving inner necessity; he would strive to win free of all encumbering ornament and reduce the material to the essential.

Schoenberg's origins were comparatively humble. Genealogy cannot trace his ancestry with any precision further than his grandfather Abraham Schönberg, who was born—the year is not known—in the town of Szécsény, Nogrod County, which lies north of Budapest on the Hungarian border with Slovakia. There Abraham married Theresia Löwy, who had been born in 1807. It appears that there was more than one person named Abraham Schönberg in Szécsény, and it is thus uncertain whether the composer's great-grandfather was a Filip (son of Simon) or a Simeon Schönberg. Virtually all that is known of these putative forebears is that they were Jews living in the Eastern regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Probably the family adopted the name Schönberg around 1782, when the Emperor Joseph II extended certain civil rights to Jews, but also required them to use surnames and to record births, marriages, and deaths. The composer's ancestors may well have originated in a town named Schönberg—for which there are several possible candidates. The most probable is Sumperk (formerly Schönberg) in

Moravia. Between 1700 and 1848, attempts to restrict the number of Jewish families in Bohemia and Moravia forced many Jews to emigrate to Hungary, and it is a reasonable hypothesis that Schoenberg's ancestors may have arrived in Szécsény from Sumperk during the eighteenth century.

Abraham and Teresia Schönberg had two sons, Ignaz and Samuel, of whom the younger—Samuel, the composer's father—was born in Szécsény on 20 September 1838. Some time afterwards the family moved to the polyglot city of Pressburg (Pozsonyi, now better known as Bratislava) in Slovakia, where Austrian, Czech, Slovak, and Hungarian cultures intermingled. Samuel's parents would die there, but in 1852, at the age of fourteen, he himself moved on to the Imperial capital, Vienna, as an apprentice to a commercial firm. Samuel had a good voice and became a member of a choral society, attending their rehearsals and performances in the evenings after his work. Eventually he went into business on his own account, opening a small shoe-shop, and in 1872 he married Pauline Nachod, ten years his junior—the daughter of an innkeeper from Prague. Pauline was a member of a large family—she had three brothers and two sisters—and her descent is better documented: her family were observant Jews who belonged to the Altneuschul, Prague's oldest synagogue, where members of the family had served as cantors. Samuel and Pauline's first attempt to have a child resulted in a stillbirth. They were living at 5 Obere Donaustrasse in the Leopoldstadt, the predominantly Jewish Second District (*II. Bezirk*) of Vienna, when their first surviving child was born on 13 September 1874—a boy given the gentile name of Arnold, but who at his circumcision a week after his birth was named Abraham (Avraham ben Schmuël), after his paternal grandfather.²

Situated in the heart of the city, and notable for its world-famous amusement park, the Prater, the Leopoldstadt (together with Brigittenau) forms a large island surrounded by the Danube Canal and, to the north, the Danube River. Though it was the oldest Jewish district in Vienna, set up as a ghetto by the Emperor Ferdinand II in the early seventeenth century, it takes its name from a persecutor of Jews—the Emperor Leopold I, who in 1670 ordered all Jews to be expelled, then appropriated

²I am grateful to the composer's grandson, E. Randol Schoenberg, for some of the family information in this chapter.

their possessions and had their synagogue razed to the ground. Not until after the revolution of 1848 had the Jewish community begun to grow again, but by the time of Schoenberg's birth the Leopoldstadt's Jewish inhabitants were on the verge of becoming a majority.

Samuel and Pauline's marriage seems to have been something of an attraction of opposites, though all in all, according to their son, it appeared to go smoothly apart from money worries. Samuel was a romantic idealist of a combative, iconoclastic cast of mind, while Pauline was conservative in her instincts, practical, deeply attached to time-honoured Jewish beliefs and traditions. Samuel was later characterized by his son as a 'freethinker' (*Freisinniger*)—a term which indicates he was an adherent of Reform Judaism, a movement which viewed the Jewish religion as something that changed and adapted as it unfolded through a process of historical development, while still retaining its essence. Arguments between the parents were a frequent occurrence, and often Pauline's brother Fritz (father of the singer Hans Nachod) would weigh in on Samuel's side. So quite early in life the young Arnold must have been aware of the contrary pulls of faith and scepticism. In the struggle to reconcile the reverence for Jewish tradition he inherited from his mother with the more critical outlook derived from his father, we see the earliest of the many dichotomies that shaped his intellectual development.

Arnold entered primary school at the age of five, by which time the family had been enlarged with the arrival of a daughter, Ottilie, and had twice moved house within the Second District, presumably into larger premises. By this time they were living in the Taborstrasse, where they would stay for the next twelve years. The house apparently lacked running water, all water having to be brought in from outside. The *II. Bezirk*, though never considered a particularly salubrious district, was conveniently close to the centre of the city. Arnold was often ill as a child, suffering from the effects of scarlet fever and also from breathing difficulties, perhaps inherited from his father, who was asthmatic.

When Arnold was seven, a horrifying event occurred which affected the lives of the Schönbergs, as it did many hundreds of Viennese families, especially Jewish ones. On 8 December 1881, just as the curtain was about to go up on the Viennese premiere of Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann* before a capacity audience in the fashionable Ringtheater, a lighted chandelier fell to the floor of the auditorium and the building was swiftly

consumed by fire. The doors, designed to open inwards, were forced shut by the pressure of the desperate crowds attempting to escape. The death toll has been put variously between 350 and 800, but it was certainly one of the biggest disasters the city has experienced. Among the victims were Pauline Schönberg's brother Heinrich Nachod and his wife, Hermine. Their two very young daughters, Mela and Olga (the latter not two years old), were orphaned, and came to live with Samuel and Pauline, although Pauline was already pregnant with her third child. The boy she gave birth to in April 1882, Arnold's younger brother, was named Heinrich, probably in memory of Heinrich Nachod. There seems to be no evidence of what the young Arnold Schoenberg thought or felt about this terrible catastrophe, which must have had a devastating impact in his home, as in the wider world of Vienna society. It is tempting to speculate that it must have had some effect on the world-view of someone who would become an eloquent composer of the senses of fear, of suffering, of terrifying premonitions, of impending disaster—and that his parents' adoption of the two orphans was also a practical lesson in charity and action according to strong principles of humanity. But all we can say for certain is that he seems always to have had good relations with his foster-sisters, especially 'cousin Olga', and that later in life she, in her turn, would be able to help her cousin and his family in a number of ways.

Neither Pauline nor Samuel Schönberg was particularly interested in art music, although both of them enjoyed singing, and Samuel used to sing Slovak folksongs (perhaps picked up in Bratislava) to his son. As mentioned, Pauline's family had provided Synagogue cantors in Prague for generations. Arnold's brother Heinrich, and at least two of his cousins, would have professional singing careers. Samuel hoped that Arnold would one day become an engineer—the career chosen by the boy's cousin Arthur Schönberg, son of Samuel's brother Ignaz, who had been born in Vienna only a few months before him. But Arnold's appetite for music seems to have been immediate and innate, and his musical gifts became evident as soon as he was given a chance to show them. He began learning the violin at the age of eight or nine and immediately, without any tuition, started producing violin duets of his own. He used as models the works he played with his violin teacher, and the fact that he was thus able to bring his childish compositions to his lessons and play them over must have been a valuable stimulus. At first these little works

progressed only as fast as his violin technique improved; but soon, after reading a biography of Mozart, he was inspired to emulate him and compose without the aid of an instrument.

At school Arnold was bullied for his small size and studiousness, but—as always in later life when he was attacked—he fought back. Significant progress came when he entered Realschule (secondary school without classics) at the age of eleven, and met there a boy a few months younger than himself named Oskar Adler. They soon became firm friends. Although Adler tends to be at best a shadowy presence in the standard histories of Viennese cultural life, by all accounts he was an inescapable part of it from the 1890s up to the *Anschluss*. Clearly he was a remarkable person and his influence on Schoenberg—who would remain in contact with him, though in later years only intermittently, throughout his life—was profound. Adler would eventually train and practise as a doctor, but he saw this as secondary to his devouring interests in music (especially chamber music), philosophy and astrology. '[His] talent as a musician', wrote Schoenberg in 1949:

was as great as his capabilities in science. Through him I learned of the existence of a theory of music, and he directed my first steps therein. He also stimulated my interest in poetry and philosophy and all my acquaintance with classical music derived from playing quartets with him, for even then he was already an excellent first violinist.³

Adler had taught himself the violin, but had great natural talent for it. He gave Schoenberg some tuition in elementary harmony and ear-training; but as the above quotation makes clear the general intellectual stimulation he provided was just as important. Adler and his brother Max (later Professor of Sociology at Vienna University) were voracious readers and even in their early youth would discuss the ideas of Kant and Schopenhauer: people nicknamed them 'the little philosophers'.

Adler, Schoenberg, and one of Schoenberg's numerous cousins formed a trio of two violins and viola, and arranged for this combination whatever music they could lay their hands on. Arnold wrote many original pieces, too, some of which have survived: polkas, marches, *Ländler*, and so forth—quite endearing efforts in the popular style of the day. A somewhat more

³ 'My Evolution' in *Style and Idea*, 2nd ed., pp. 79–80.

ambitious attempt was a '*Romance* (Rémineur) pour deux violons et alto par Arnaude Schönberg', designated as 'op. 1'. The Frenchified title probably betrays the influence of his uncle Fritz Nachod, the nearest thing to an intellectual in the family, who had taught Arnold French while he was still at school and kindled an interest in poetry and drama, especially Schiller. Fritz wrote poetry of his own.

Samuel Schönberg's business was no more than a modest success. In 1886 he branched out, acquiring a commission and collection agency at Kleine Pfarrgasse 31. But only three years later, in the Europe-wide pulmonary influenza epidemic of 1890, he died from emphysema, apparently aggravated by his heavy drinking and smoking, on the last day of the year, aged fifty-two. Thus the fifteen-year-old Arnold was left as head of a household consisting of his mother, sister, brother and cousins. He, too, had suffered severe influenza attacks during the year, something that was to recur every spring for the next decade or so. The family moved house several times, and to help support Pauline and the children, Arnold had to leave school (where he had been a cocky, irrepressible, unwilling pupil of average scholastic ability) and start work as a clerk in a small private bank, giving all his salary to his mother. He hated the work. Music, however, continued to be his absorbing interest, whether composing or playing or just walking in the Prater with friends, talking about it and listening to a military band playing Wagner excerpts—a stocky, cheerful, argumentative, rather bumptious youth in a yellow overcoat, already trenchant in his opinions, already balding on the domed cranium that was to be his most distinguishing physical feature. In addition to Oskar Adler he was making several other important friends, drawn together by their common interest in music. Edmund Eysler, later to be a successful operetta composer, was another person with whom he played chamber music on a regular basis. There was David Josef Bach (later a linguist and mathematician), and also the singer Walter Pieau and Moritz Violin—a pianist and aspiring composer who, as a child prodigy, had got to know Brahms. They thought of themselves as rather a Bohemian circle.

In time, the Adler-Schoenberg trio became a quartet, which met on Sunday afternoons in a little servant's room in a house on the Angartenstrasse, followed by walks in the Prater discussing philosophy. Schoenberg graduated to the viola, then to a substitute cello (a viola fitted with zither strings) and finally to the cello itself, which remained his principal

instrument afterwards. His actual playing, though never technically wonderful, is said to have had great character and intense musicality; and the experience of playing all four roles in a string quartet was invaluable grounding for the future composer of so much chamber music. Not surprisingly, as soon as he had found out from an encyclopedia article how to construct a sonata-form movement, string quartets began to flow from his pen. He was now about eighteen years of age. It hardly mattered that his formal training remained non-existent: in later years he often said that Art is not a matter of 'can' but of 'must', and the 'must' of music impelled him from the start. During the summer of 1893, while on a week's holiday with David Josef Bach at Kierling near Vienna, he composed several songs—apparently his first *Lieder*—and presented a collection of four of them to Bach's sister Eva, to whom he would briefly become engaged.

Politically most of Schoenberg's friends inclined towards socialism and felt the pressing importance of encouraging an appreciation of the arts among working people. David Bach would soon be active in the workers' choral movement and eventually founded a series of Workers' Symphony Concerts (*Arbeiter-Sinfonie-Konzerte*) in Vienna. From the turn of the century Oskar Adler led the Adler String Quartet—no doubt developed from the childhood quartet that had included Schoenberg, but with another of Adler's friends, the composer Franz Schmidt, as regular cellist. This quartet played especially in working men's circles. Although Schoenberg was genuinely interested in socialist ideas at this period, it was probably more as an ideal of human conduct than a politically attainable goal.

His idealistic outlook was certainly fostered and supported by his continued contact with Oskar Adler. The American violinist Louis Krasner, who came to know Adler in Vienna a generation later, recalled that 'all of artistic and cultural Vienna came to him for counsel... all creative artists seemed linked to him and were no doubt influenced by him'.⁴ From the early years of the century Adler gave lectures on the areas where

⁴Letter, 20 June 1983, from Louis Krasner to Raymond Head, quoted by permission of Raymond Head. Adler's counsel included casting the horoscopes of those who thus came to him. Krasner, who gave the world première of Alban Berg's Violin Concerto, sought Adler's advice on how to play the solo part. Of Adler's playing he commented 'although he was self-taught and handled his instrument in a very personal way, his sound and his music-making were simply divine'. (ibid.) The writer and violin-teacher Hans Keller, who studied with Adler, said

music and philosophy overlapped. In one of these he spoke of himself as ‘only one tone in the great symphony of the World’, a phrase that seems to echo the ‘echo of the Holy Voice’ in Schoenberg’s Second String Quartet. Adler viewed Astrology, on which he became an eminent authority and published a great deal, as ‘the theory of the indivisible cosmic connection of all events’. The Earth, and the entire universe, was to be considered a single organism whose inner life was revealed in numerical relations. Music, ‘the immediate inner experience of numbers’, was the only means that offered direct experience of that cosmic accord. As we shall see when we come to examine Schoenberg’s theoretical ideas—especially his conception of a piece of music as an organism whose every feature and event must be related and interconnected—if Adler was formulating his ideas while he and Schoenberg were still teenage comrades we can hardly discount him as an intellectual influence, though of course the influence may also have flowed in the other direction.⁵

Schoenberg was not just concerned with music and philosophy at this time. At sixteen he fell hopelessly in love with a fourteen-year-old cousin on his mother’s side, Malvina Goldschmied. The letters and poems he wrote to her are among his earliest writings that have survived. The letters cast a revealing light on his youthful convictions: he claimed to be an ‘Unbeliever’, but (reflecting the influence of Reform Judaism) he felt the Bible was the foundation of all things and could give guidance in the modern world—an early instance of his penchant for paradox. Moreover, a poem he sent Malvina in about 1891 urges her to look at the core meaning of any misfortune that befalls her and not to be confused by its outward appearance: adumbrating already a concern between outward manifestation and inner meaning that he would pursue throughout his life.

‘He was the best violinist I ever knew. . . . He was the best musician whom Schoenberg ever knew, according to Schoenberg himself. . . . From Adler, he would have got his view of music as a philosophical truth-seeking discipline.’ (Quoted in Joan Allen Smith, ‘Schoenberg’s Way’, *Perspectives of New Music* Fall–Winter 1979/Spring–Summer 1980, pp. 259–60. I quote from this source hereafter simply as ‘Schoenberg’s Way’, with page references.)

⁵ In 1918 Adler wrote a book entitled (in imitation of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*) *Critique of Pure Music* (*Die Kritik der reinen Musik*), and subtitled ‘an Examination of the Perception-Critical Bases of the Science of Music’. It has never been published. In a draft preface which Adler added many years later, he recalled that parts of the book were greatly indebted to his teenage discussions with Schoenberg. He also claimed that Schoenberg declared that this was the book which *he* would most have liked to have written.

Schoenberg composed a short orchestral work in Malvina's honour, which survives in a touchingly clumsy piano arrangement under the title *Lied ohne Worte*. In 1894 he also wrote a set of short pieces for two pianos at the suggestion of Richard Heuberger, to whom he had gone for advice. Schoenberg was much more gifted in writing for strings, however. In the same year, 1894, Oskar Adler and some friends gave a private performance of part of one of Schoenberg's early string quartets to the blind organist-composer Josef Labor, who then urged him to devote himself entirely to music.

Circumstances were conspiring to propel the young bank-clerk in that direction. Before long a new friendship was to transform the course of Schoenberg's musical enthusiasms—and ultimately of his emotional life. In late 1895 one of the rising stars of the younger generation of Viennese musicians, the gifted composer and conductor Alexander von Zemlinsky, founded an amateur orchestral society, the 'Musikalische Verein Polyhymnia', which would draw its personnel from various amateur groups active in city's Second District. Weekly orchestral rehearsals (mainly of music for strings) took place in a hotel, leading to a succession of public concerts. At the first rehearsal Zemlinsky found, at the only cello desk, a striking young man 'fervently ill-treating his instrument': a junior bank clerk who 'preferred sharps and flats to stocks and shares'. It was Schoenberg, and here began one of the most significant relationships of his life, with the man he came invariably to address as '*Lieber Alex*'.⁶ A quarter of a century later he would write of Zemlinsky: 'he was my teacher, I became his friend, later his brother-in-law, and in the years since then he has remained the man whose attitude I try to imagine when I need advice'.

Diminutive, ugly, charming, highly cultured, Zemlinsky was one of the finest musical minds of his generation. Conservatoire-trained, with excellent connections, he was becoming recognized as an unusual talent and was making his way into the highest circles of Viennese musical society. He was a member of the Wiener Tonkünstlerverein, whose honorary president was Brahms, and which had already presented per-

⁶ There are conflicting accounts of how they first came into contact. Oskar Adler and David J. Bach had both, apparently, already suggested that Schoenberg should study with Zemlinsky; but it seems certain that their actual meeting took place in the context of 'Polyhymnia'.

formances of some of his works. Part Jewish by birth,⁷ and only three years older than Schoenberg, he was an ideal instructor for the amateur cellist-composer. Although their personalities were very different, the chemistry was right: they soon became firm friends, continually in each other's company, united in an enthusiasm for new ideas and new music.

It was Zemlinsky, Schoenberg testified near the end of his life, 'to whom I owe most of my knowledge of the technique and the problems of composing'. Although he referred to Zemlinsky as his teacher, it seems there was no formal master-pupil relationship—and given Schoenberg's combative nature, perhaps there never could have been. For a while the older composer gave Schoenberg some instruction in counterpoint, and Schoenberg brought his works to Zemlinsky for comment and advice. Otherwise his contribution to Schoenberg's evolution into a composer seems to have consisted in general observations and discussion—and of course the example of the works that he himself was then writing prolifically.

It is significant, however, that at the Conservatoire Zemlinsky had studied with the composer Robert Fuchs (a friend of Brahms). Fuchs had stressed to his students a technique he observed in the classics—the way that a single melody or figure or motif might be exhaustively treated in various ways and used to produce the thematic material of an entire movement, even perhaps an entire work. This was not an area that received much attention in contemporary writing on music, which was generally far more poetic in its approach, although Brahms for one had certainly noted and developed the technique. It became a cornerstone of Zemlinsky's own compositional methods—one that he undoubtedly communicated to Schoenberg, who in time would take it in directions hitherto undreamed of.

He also benefited from Zemlinsky's very wide-ranging general culture, which considerably broadened his musical horizons. So far Schoenberg had been a passionate admirer of Brahms, though he never plucked up the courage to introduce himself to the great composer, a familiar figure in Vienna's streets, cafés, and concert-halls. Zemlinsky also admired Brahms, and from far closer quarters: Brahms had taken a friendly interest

⁷ Zemlinsky's mother came from a family of Sephardic Jews; his father, previously Catholic, converted to Judaism in order to marry her.

in Zemlinsky's progress, attended his performances, invited him to bring scores to his home for discussion. In 1896 he induced his own publisher, Simrock, to publish two of Zemlinsky's chamber works. But Zemlinsky, a budding opera composer, also greatly admired Wagner, and the 'progressive' ideas of music-drama and supercharged chromatic harmony associated with Wagner's scores. He was one of the first of the younger generation to cut across the Brahms-Wagner axis that had long divided the musical world into opposing camps. He soon brought Schoenberg to appreciate the excellence, the power, and boldness of Wagner's innovations. Schoenberg became an ardent Wagnerian, and by the end of the 1890s he had heard all the major operas several times. He came to appreciate Anton Bruckner, too, and heard him lecture at the Vienna Academy.

Zemlinsky's influence was not merely musical, however: he was thoroughly versed in the latest developments in art and literature. In all probability it was he who turned Schoenberg towards the writers who were to form an important part of his mental universe over the next decade—among them Richard Dehmel, Stefan George, Jens Peter Jacobsen, and Maurice Maeterlinck. He also brought Schoenberg into the circle of young writers and musicians who patronized the Café Griensteinl and were the reason for its nickname 'Café Megalomania'. As the critic Max Graf recalled,

One day Zemlinsky brought along to our circle a young man, whom he introduced as his pupil, telling us we would eventually hear much more of his compositions. The new arrival was, indeed, remarkable enough. His Pierrot-like face flashed with energy and relish for argument. He had the oddest ideas. . . . It was Arnold Schoenberg.⁸

Although some of Zemlinsky's friends were sceptical of this argumentative interloper, others—such as the composer-pianist Erich J. Wolff—were impressed and became valuable allies. Zemlinsky himself demonstrated his faith in Schoenberg in the most concrete way. On 2 March 1896 he conducted the 'Polyhymnia' orchestra in a concert including the premiere of a *Notturmo* by Schoenberg—probably the first significant public performance of any of his music. 'Polyhymnia' also

⁸ Quoted in Ernst Hilmar, *Arnold Schönberg* (Vienna, 1974), p. 165.

held a song-competition in which Schoenberg was awarded a prize for his early song, *Ein Schilflied*.

Shortly after he began playing for ‘Polyhymnia’, Schoenberg’s clerking days came to an end. According to David Bach, one day he came home and announced joyfully: ‘My boss has gone bankrupt—nobody will ever get me inside a bank again!’ From now on, he insisted, he would work only at music. Naturally his family did not take to the idea at all. Relatives blamed him for unnecessarily worrying his mother; there were quarrels and determined efforts to get him to return to banking. Only Fritz Nachod, the romantic uncle, supported his stand.

But Schoenberg had made up his mind. In 1896 he had begun conducting a working-men’s chorus called ‘Freisinn’ in Mödling. With the help of the socialist music-teacher Josef Scheu (1841–1904), a key figure in the development of workers’ choirs in Austria, he also secured a post as conductor of a metal-workers’ choir in Stockerau, twelve miles from Vienna. Schoenberg had to walk there and back when he could not afford the fare. Later he took charge of similar choirs in the villages of Meidling and Mödling (now suburbs of Vienna). It was satisfying work, and he found himself in sympathy with the workers’ political aspirations. These choirs were closely related to the social democratic movement, and knew their dynamic young conductor as ‘Comrade Schoenberg’—and ‘Comrade Arnold Schoenberg’ he was in press reviews of their concerts. The programmes—which tended to consist of folksongs, patriotic songs, and hymns to freedom (the texts sometimes having to be rewritten at the behest of the Imperial authorities) along with partsongs by Brahms and Strauss—were very successful. But they brought in little money. Schoenberg thus began, in addition, many years’ drudgery of working as a copyist and arranger for music publishers, making piano arrangements of other composers’ works and scoring operettas for their much better-known composers.

For much of 1897—the year during which he also aided Zemlinsky by helping to prepare the vocal score of the latter’s prize-winning opera *Sarema*—he was busy with writing and perfecting a String Quartet in D major. The latest of several quartets he had written by this time, this is the very earliest piece by Schoenberg to have gained a foothold in today’s repertoire, though it remained unpublished in his lifetime. It was his first success, and it nearly brought about a direct connection between

Schoenberg and Brahms. According to Hanns Eisler, on one of his last visits to the ailing Brahms, Zemlinsky showed him a draft of Schoenberg's quartet:

...Brahms, who was usually uninterested in musical beginners, began to display some interest. He inquired about this Schoenberg, and when Zemlinsky informed him that since the age of 18 Schoenberg had been earning his bread by writing and copying-work, Brahms—to Zemlinsky's astonishment—offered to pay the money to enable Schoenberg to attend the Vienna Conservatoire. That was the greatest honour that Schoenberg ever experienced in his life. But Schoenberg would not accept a loan.⁹

Presumably because he was too proud—and presumably, too, because he knew that two years before Zemlinsky had also refused, with thanks, a similar offer of financial assistance from Brahms.

Fate prevented any further contact between Brahms and Schoenberg, for the older composer was already dying of liver cancer and expired on 3 April. The D major Quartet made its own way into the world. Schoenberg completed the work during the summer, which he spent with Zemlinsky at the mountain resort of Payerbach; on his mentor's advice he then revised it, substituting a new second movement. Zemlinsky persuaded his colleagues on the board of the Tonkünstlerverein to permit the Quartet's first performance on 17 March 1898 at a private concert of the society, and Schoenberg was admitted to its membership. On 20 December of the same year the work was performed in public by the Fitzner Quartet, in the Bösendorfersaal—ten years, almost to the day, before that venue would resound to the 'scandal' of another Schoenberg

⁹Hanns Eisler, *Materialen zu einer Dialektik der Musik* (Leipzig, 1973), p. 206. Although this anecdote—with its implication of Brahms, as it were, handing on the mantle to Schoenberg—is seldom cited in either the Brahms or Schoenberg literature, there seems no reason to doubt its basic veracity. Eisler was Schoenberg's pupil—for a while, one of his favourites—from 1919 to 1923; he was also close to Zemlinsky in the mid-1920s. He can only have heard the story direct from one of them (perhaps more likely from Zemlinsky). Nevertheless as it stands the account poses problems. It is generally believed that Schoenberg composed the D major Quartet in summer 1897, yet Zemlinsky cannot have shown it to Brahms later than March of that year. It might be thought that the work in question was one of Schoenberg's earlier quartets, but Eisler is specific that the D major was involved. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that, as Schoenberg told Egon Wellesz, he first presented the score to Zemlinsky for criticism when only the first two movements had been written and he had just started the third. So likely Brahms saw only this portion.

String Quartet. The D major experienced no such baptism of fire; its warmly melodious style was well received. Brahms's friend and champion Eduard Hanslick, the all-powerful, arch-reactionary critic of the *Neue Freie Presse*, was moved to comment: 'It seems to me that a new Mozart is growing up in Vienna'. But this was the last occasion that the work was heard in Schoenberg's lifetime. Not wholly satisfied with it, he withdrew the score (though he carefully preserved it) and moved on to other things.

The Tonkünstlerverein's performance of the String Quartet coincided with a significant change in Schoenberg's formal religious orientation. Catholic Austria has always suffered from latent—and often not so latent—anti-Semitism. By the mid-1890s, although only a tenth of Vienna's population was Jewish, they were visible and successful, and therefore unpopular, in most walks of life. In 1895 the charismatic leader of the 'Christian Socialist' party, Karl Lueger, had been elected mayor of the city on a strongly anti-Jewish programme. Although Emperor Franz Josef at first refused to confirm him in office, he came to power in 1897, the year that Theodor Herzl, in reaction to the contemporary 'Dreyfus case' in France, founded the World Zionist Organization to campaign for a separate Jewish homeland. Moderate Jews, who were generally content to make careers in the states where they had spent all their lives, began to find themselves in an invidious position, caught between gentile reactionaries and Zionist zealots. Many relinquished the Jewish faith and sought assimilation within the Christian community. (Gustav Mahler, for instance, converted to Roman Catholicism in 1897.)

Thus in March 1898 Schoenberg, persuaded to this course by his friend Walter Pieau, converted to Protestantism. Zemlinsky later did the same. But the denomination that Schoenberg chose—the Lutheran Evangelical Church—was even so a minority within Austrian Protestantism. Little is known of the immediate reasons behind his choice. The fact that he chose not to enter the majority Catholic church shows that in this as in other matters he was following his own course; probably the Protestant stress on individual responsibility, biblical authority, and justification through faith and works appealed to him more strongly than Catholic ceremonial, and the association with Luther reinforced his attachment to the most central strands of German culture. Although Schoenberg was never closely affiliated to any congregation, and though the conversion

was probably forced upon him as much by social and career considerations as by inner conviction, there is no reason to believe that he did not take his adopted religion seriously. He took everything seriously. His conversion marked the end of the first stage in a lifetime of spiritual restlessness and searching.

He continued to compose copiously, especially songs, but few larger works reached completion. It was becoming an established pattern, nevertheless, that the summer vacation, away from Vienna, was the period when important creative endeavours were conceived or completed. Schoenberg's main project during the summer of 1898 was a work of very different orientation from the Brahmsian-Dvořákian D major Quartet. It was his first composition for large orchestra, a symphonic poem entitled *Frühlings Tod* (The Death of Spring) after a poem by Nikolaus Lenau, in an ultra-Romantic, post-Wagnerian idiom.¹⁰ Although Schoenberg completed a substantial amount of this work, it was destined to remain a tantalizing fragment. However the following year, holidaying again with Zemlinsky and his sister Mathilde in Payerbach, in the space of a mere three weeks he composed the work which posterity has come to regard as his first masterpiece. It was a string sextet, which capitalized on his undoubted talents for chamber music and string writing while infusing the medium with the new idiom of post-Wagnerian chromaticism and the literary basis of a symphonic poem: *Verklärte Nacht* (Transfigured Night) after a poem by Richard Dehmel.

Never before had Schoenberg written anything so passionate. It was Zemlinsky who had introduced him to Dehmel's poetry; and despite some reservations, Zemlinsky recognized that with this work his erstwhile 'pupil' had become entirely his own master. He submitted Schoenberg's sextet to the Tonkünstlerverein, but this time the reaction was far less favourable: Schoenberg had made astonishing advances in two years, and the members of the Society found themselves confronted with an uncompromisingly 'modern' music which went well beyond Wagner

¹⁰ Despite the differences in style, there might have been an intended connexion between Schoenberg's work and Zemlinsky's slightly earlier cantata *Frühlingbegräbnis* (The Burial of Spring) to a text by Brahms's friend Paul Heyse, which Zemlinsky dedicated to Brahms's memory. A symphonic poem in memory of Brahms would perhaps be a contradiction in terms, however, and there is no doubt that the *Frühlings Tod* torso shows Schoenberg casting off the last traces of his early thralldom to the more superficial aspects of Brahmsian style.

in chromatic intensity. ‘It sounds as if someone had smeared the score of *Tristan* while it was still wet!’ commented the operetta-composer Richard Heuberger (a friend of Brahms) after a private play-through the following year. *Verklärte Nacht* was eventually rejected for public performance, officially because it contained a chord (see p. 205) which nobody could find in the harmony textbooks.

Outraged by this treatment, Schoenberg resigned from the Tonkünstlerverein. He was, in any case, already engaged on a work of incomparably greater scope. Shortly before these events, the Verein had announced a competition for a new song-cycle. Schoenberg resolved to enter, and in March 1900 began setting some poems for voice and piano from the *Gurrensage*, an extended verse-sequence written in 1869 by the Danish novelist, poet, and botanist Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847–85) in a recently published German translation by the Viennese critic and philologist Robert Franz Arnold. Schoenberg may have been led to Jacobsen by Zemlinsky, who was an enthusiast for Jacobsen’s works—and was to be a judge for the competition. But soon a much larger conception erupted from of his imagination: scorning the competition’s May deadline, Schoenberg went on to set Jacobsen’s entire sequence, on a vast scale, for solo voices, speaker, choirs, and an enormous orchestra—a larger performing body than any previous composer had dared to ask for. Parts I and II of this immense undertaking were composed in short score by the middle of 1900, but work had to be abandoned for almost a year while Schoenberg earned sufficient to support himself—scoring other people’s operettas. One night, after a party with his Mödling choral society, he climbed the nearby Anninger Mountain and, after hiking through the mist-shrouded forest in the early morning, watched the sun rise—an experience that proved the inspiration for the great Hymn to the Sun that closes the *Gurrelieder*. By mid-1901 the whole work—one of the summits of late Romantic music—had been drafted, and Schoenberg was able to order music-paper of an unheard-of size (no less than forty-eight staves) on which to score it.

In the gorgeous tapestry of love-songs that makes up the first part of the *Gurrelieder*, he seems to give voice to his passion for Mathilde von Zemlinsky, three years his junior. Her brother once described their mother, Clara, as ‘a very withdrawn, retiring woman’, and Mathilde, who had become a close friend of Schoenberg’s sister Ottilie, appears

to have resembled her in this. Nevertheless, although she was later to be overshadowed by her husband, and by the tragic events surrounding her elopement with Gerstl, Mathilde must have been a strong personality to attract the young Schoenberg. In some notes for a biography dictated towards the end of his life, Schoenberg implied that she instigated their affair on the rebound from another man who had been engaged to her but left her, and that she used emotional blackmail to ensnare him; also that most of his friends disapproved of his engagement to Mathilde.

But it would seem that there was plenty of mutual attraction involved. In May 1901, Mathilde announced that she was pregnant with their first child. By now, or only a little later, they were living together—they certainly holidayed together at Mattsee in the summer, and in early October the couple went through a registry-office marriage in Bratislava. Although her brother had renounced Judaism some time before, at that point Mathilde was still officially Jewish; she renounced the faith only four days after the marriage was registered, and on 18 October the religious ceremony took place in Vienna, according to Protestant rites, in a church on the Dorotheergasse.

Schoenberg's marriage to Mathilde bound him even closer to his friend Zemlinsky, whose complicated emotional life had just reached its greatest crisis. For most of 1900 and 1901 he had been wooing his composition pupil, the spoilt, beautiful, and imperious Alma Schindler, the daughter of a wealthy artistic family and herself a talented song composer. This was the most serious of his many liaisons; Alma became his Muse. Through Zemlinsky she came to know Schoenberg—whom she at first disliked, considering him 'too Jewish' and a mere hanger-on of her adored teacher. Zemlinsky told her the world would talk of Schoenberg before long; he was 'a fiery spirit in every sense, a true revolutionary'. Although hardly untainted by the prevalent anti-Semitism of her class, Alma returned—for a time—Zemlinsky's affection, but their passion was never satisfactorily consummated. In the autumn of 1901 the relationship ran into difficulties and, less than a month after Schoenberg married Mathilde, Alma found herself torn between Zemlinsky and a man nearly twice her age, though one of the most powerful and charismatic musical personalities in Vienna: none other than the controversial artistic director of the Hofoper, the composer and conductor Gustav Mahler.

Meanwhile, in Berlin, the theatrical impresario, playwright, and novelist Ernst von Wolzogen had opened a new kind of popular theatre. It was inspired by the example of the French cabaret of the 1890s, whose most famous star, Yvette Guilbert, had visited Berlin in 1899. Wolzogen was also supporting the ideas of ‘art for the common man’ proclaimed by the influential (and lightly satirical) poet-journalist Otto Julius Bierbaum, who had just had a sensational best-seller with a collection of *Deutsche Chansons*—light-hearted, satirical poems by contemporary writers, suitable for turning into popular songs. The collection was subtitled *Brettlieder*. Wolzogen’s ‘Buntes Theater’ (Yellow, or Motley Theatre), generally known as the *Überbrettl* (literally ‘super-plank’, a term derived from ‘the boards’ of a stage, used to denote a small variety show), was an experiment in bringing literature into the convivial atmosphere of the music-hall, with dramatic sketches, recitations, and chanson-settings of light verse by Bierbaum, Dehmel, Morgenstern, Wedekind, and others. Historically speaking it was the first stirring of the impulse which would give rise to the more notorious Berlin cabaret culture of the Weimar era.

In May 1901, the month that Mathilde announced her pregnancy, Wolzogen brought his ‘Buntes Theater’ troupe to Vienna, playing to packed houses at the Carltheater. His first musical director, who had been recommended by Zemlinsky, was Oskar Straus, later to be famous as a operetta composer. When the troupe next visited in September, Zemlinsky recommended a new director: Schoenberg, who with a wife and prospective family to support now urgently needed to find employment, outside Vienna if need be. In fact, Schoenberg had already composed one song for a Vienna cabaret, and had set several of the poems Bierbaum had included in *Deutsche Chansons*. Wolzogen, currently hiring the best talent on offer to keep the Buntes Theater ahead of its rivals, engaged him. Early in December—just before Zemlinsky was devastated by Alma’s breaking off their relationship, and accepting Mahler’s offer of marriage—the newlyweds departed for Germany. Their first child, a daughter, Gertrude, was born in Berlin the next month.

Though appointed as Wolzogen’s *Kapellmeister*, Schoenberg found himself, just as in Vienna, largely engaged in arranging others’ music. (Zemlinsky passed on to him some piano arrangements of operas he had been commissioned to do by the publisher Weinberger.) He seems to have done little actual conducting in the *Überbrettl*, and was soon dissatisfied

with artistic standards there. Whether this was due to Wolzogen's anti-Semitism is not known, but they parted company when Schoenberg's contract ran out in July 1902. Of his own *Brettli-lieder* only *Nachtwandler*, written for piano, piccolo, trumpet, and side-drum, is known to have had a single performance—and was then withdrawn because the trumpet part was found too difficult.

Fortunately soon after his contract expired Schoenberg came into contact with Richard Strauss, who at the age of thirty-eight had already completed his major symphonic poems and was recognized as Germany's leading composer. Strauss read through the draft of the *Gurrelieder* and was deeply impressed. Seeing Schoenberg's dire financial straits, he gave him copying work extracting the parts of his new Choral Ballad *Tailfefer* and arranged for him to receive the 1903 Liszt Scholarship (the sum of 1000 Marks, from the income of the Liszt Foundation, annually awarded to a gifted musician). Sending the scores of *Gurrelieder* and *Verklärte Nacht* to his composer-colleague Max von Schillings on 18 December 1902, Strauss wrote that Schoenberg was a man 'in bitterest need, who is *very* talented'. Schillings, in charge of administering the stipend, was not impressed: 'Everywhere colour, colour-noise, colour-confusion—and almost no depiction, no line, nothing natural. . . . I don't believe I can ever warm to these artistic manifestations, these instrumentation-acrobatics . . .', but in view of Schoenberg's situation he acceded to Strauss's plea.¹¹ Strauss also recommended Schoenberg for a teaching position at the Stern Conservatoire, one of the most respected music schools in Berlin. This kind of work was much more to his liking.

Strauss gave Schoenberg artistic encouragement, too, at a time when he was writing little (he had laid aside the orchestration of *Gurrelieder* owing to pressure of hack-work). Directing Schoenberg's attention to Maeterlinck's drama *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Strauss urged him to attempt an opera on that subject.¹² After he had examined the play, however,

¹¹ For this exchange see the exhibition catalogue *Richard Strauss—Autographen, Porträts, Bühnenbilder* (Munich: Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek, 1999), pp. 150–1. Schillings's early hostility to Schoenberg's music may be significant for their future relations, when he was principal of the Prussian Academy of Arts and Schoenberg held his composition master-classes there during 1926–33.

¹² Apparently Strauss discounted the importance of Debussy's recently performed *Pelléas et Mélisande*, while Schoenberg later claimed that at the time he was ignorant of its very existence!

Schoenberg made a perhaps bolder decision: he would use it as the basis of a symphonic poem—the form in which Strauss was held to reign supreme. He began composing his *Pelleas und Melisande* in July 1902 and completed it the following February—by which time it had grown into a massive score, for very large orchestra, fully on the scale of Strauss's largest symphonic poems and rather beyond them in textural and polyphonic complexity.

At this very time, in Vienna, Zemlinsky was also composing an ambitious symphonic poem, *Die Seejungfrau* (The Mermaid), after the fairytale by Hans Christian Andersen. The composers' correspondence shows that in these parallel works they were both attempting to end the long-established dichotomy between 'programmatic' and 'absolute' music (continuing, therefore, a process Schoenberg had initiated with *Verklärte Nacht*). Though their symphonic poems would be narrative and illustrative, using the latest resources of post-Wagnerian harmony and orchestral colour, they were to be composed 'in the spirit of Brahms', with the firmest possible purely musical architecture and the logical, organic development of themes. However, while for Zemlinsky this meant giving his work a three-movement quasi-symphonic form, in *Pelleas* Schoenberg created a single huge movement which subsumed the characteristics of a four-movement symphony, plus introduction and epilogue.

Pelleas was the main artistic fruit of his first Berlin sojourn. Zemlinsky, rejected by Alma, contrasted his own dejection with his brother-in-law's habitual 'optimism, patience, humour and *joie de vivre*'. But financial worries continued to make life difficult for the Schoenbergs, and in July 1903 they returned to Vienna, living at first in the house of David Josef Bach's parents in Mödling. In Vienna, at least, something of a reputation now preceded Arnold as a composer of striking modernist tendencies. His songs, Opp. 1 and 2, had had some performances. Hearing the première of Op. 1, with Zemlinsky at the piano, Alma Schindler declared herself 'flabbergasted': '... unbelievably showy but without the slightest concession to an ear accustomed to melody. . . . By no means uninteresting—but beautiful . . . ?'¹³ Schoenberg, she decided, was 'an aberration'. At the first performance of Op. 2 in December 1901 there were vocal protests

¹³ Alma Mahler-Werfel, *Diaries 1898–1902*, selected and translated by Antony Beaumont (London, 1998), p. 350.

from the audience. In March 1902 *Verklärte Nacht* was finally heard in public, though Schoenberg was unable to come to Vienna for the occasion. The performers were the quartet led by Mahler's brother-in-law, Arnold Rosé, augmented by two other players, one of them the composer and cellist Franz Schmidt. It was on the whole a public success—Rosé took six bows. There was hissing and restiveness among a section of the audience, but many took note of the composer who could pour such concentrated emotion and advanced harmonic content into the confining mould of chamber music. The battle-lines between conservatism and radicalism, in music as in the other arts, were now clearly drawn. In positions of power only Mahler, at the Hofoper, was unequivocally aligned with new music and new standards; elsewhere old-style *Brahmsianer* like Heuberger (now President of the Tonkünstlerverein) were in control. Schoenberg was only too eager to enter the fray.

With Mathilde and their daughter he rented an apartment in the Liechtensteinstrasse, in Vienna's Ninth District. From his study, Schoenberg had a view over the Thury and the Leichten valley, with a church whose bells, for a seemingly endless succession of funerals, would often disrupt his afternoons set aside for teaching or composing. Before long, Zemlinsky had moved into the same building and the two friends hatched plans to further their careers. The first idea was to set up a kind of 'free conservatoire'; and in the autumn of 1903 the philanthropist and educationalist Dr Eugenie Schwarzwald, who had been introduced to Schoenberg by their mutual friend Adolf Loos, made available classrooms for that purpose in the girls' school she ran in Vienna. The project was not well supported, and lasted for only a year; but the classes were attended by several students from the Institute of Music History at Vienna University, encouraged by the Institute's director, Guido Adler, who was sympathetic to new ideas and benevolently disposed to Schoenberg. When Schoenberg began to take private composition pupils in 1904, these formed the core of his circle of young disciples.¹⁴

¹⁴ Schoenberg did in fact have some pupils prior to 1904, starting with Vilma von Webenau (1875–1953), who came to him for instruction around 1899 and continued study in Berlin while Schoenberg was working at the *Überbrettel*. She was one of those who had music performed at the first public concert devoted to Schoenberg's pupils (Vienna, 4 November 1908) in the company of pieces by Berg, Webern, Stein, Jalowetz, Karl Horwitz, O. de Ivanov, and a Grieg orchestration by Viktor Krüger. Webenau later lived in Vienna as (in her words): 'a very insignificant composer and music-teacher'.

Among the first was a deeply serious young man, son of a civil servant from Carinthia: Anton von Webern. Shortly afterwards a tall, gangling trainee civil servant called Alban Berg abandoned his career to study with Schoenberg—and soon became fast friends with Webern. Schoenberg viewed Webern with respect, and before long tended to treat him more as a colleague than a pupil; his relations with Berg were also close, though more difficult (as an acquaintance once said, ‘Schoenberg did not agree with Berg’s literary style, his handwriting, or even his dress’). Webern and Berg were the first, and perhaps the most important, of the many notable composers Schoenberg was to teach in coming years, and together with him they were to form the central trinity of what has been called the ‘Second Viennese School’.¹⁵ However others who would make their mark in different ways also came to him in these early years, such as Heinrich Jalowetz, Erwin Stein, and Egon Wellesz. Perhaps no other composition teacher in history has trained up so many creative musicians who made substantial contributions to the development of the art.

During his brief time at the Stern Conservatoire Schoenberg—himself virtually self-taught—had discovered his innate gifts and enthusiasm for teaching. His charismatic and controversial personality made him a magnet for Vienna’s rebellious musical youth. His students became his eager partisans: they were all in awe of him, and some remained so for the rest of their lives. Not all survived the bruising encounter with his dominant, indeed domineering personality, but he was aware of this trait in himself and did his utmost to ensure that his pupils, rather than becoming ‘Schoenberg clones’, were enabled to develop their full potential and their own artistic personality. For example, Berg and Webern, he saw at once, were already innately gifted song-writers; he therefore sought to develop their technique in instrumental music, and in the construction of larger forms.

Schoenberg demanded absolute personal loyalty, faithful observance of his methods of instruction and unremitting hard work. In return he

¹⁵ This misleading term is only current in English-speaking countries. The term employed in Austria and Germany, ‘Wiener Schule’ or ‘Neue Wiener Schule’, suggests an analogy with the group of early symphonic composers active in Vienna in the mid-eighteenth century, such as Monn, Vanhal and Wagenseil. There was never a ‘First Viennese School’: in the great Classical trinity, Mozart and Beethoven were not Haydn’s pupils or disciples in the sense that Berg and Webern were Schoenberg’s.

offered a teaching unlike any other, approached in a spirit totally opposed to the rule-bound conventional instruction of the Conservatoire. He proceeded strictly and systematically, basing harmony and counterpoint on the textbooks he most favoured (such as Bellermann's counterpoint manual and Bernhard Marx's *Kompositionslehre*) and on analysis of the classics. Yet he was anything but doctrinaire: everything—from the most basic harmony exercise—was to be done creatively. The student, even if he was not primarily interested in composition, had to be a composer from the first moment, to make a composer's decisions and to make those decisions not by rote, not arbitrarily, but out of expressive necessity. The subsequent work arose entirely from what the pupil was able to do and the way he (and in later years she) did it. The students also gained from his conversation, his well-stocked mind, his ability to look at musical problems from a myriad different angles, his wish to improve and sharpen their musicianship, and indeed their character, in every possible way. Schoenberg's circle was soon exponentially enlarged by a coterie of youthful enthusiasts. Before long critics were likening him to Socrates, but not as a compliment—as a 'seducer of the young'.

His position was morally strengthened by the fact that he received support from the one man in Vienna whose uncompromising musical idealism matched his own and who was, moreover, in a position to encourage young composers—Gustav Mahler, the conductor of the Court Opera. They were introduced at a rehearsal of *Verklärte Nacht* in 1903 and Mahler, greatly impressed, became a staunch and generous defender of Schoenberg, unselfishly associating himself with music which, as the years progressed, even he had difficulty understanding. For his part, Schoenberg came to idolize the charismatic composer-conductor, though at first he was dismissive about Mahler's music. He realized his mistake when, with Zemlinsky and Webern, as well as other pupils from the Schwarzwald school, he attended Mahler's rehearsals of his Third Symphony at the Musikverein in December 1904. 'I saw the forces of evil and good wrestling with each other,' he wrote to Mahler afterwards. 'I saw a man in torment struggling towards inward harmony; I divined a personality, a drama, and *truthfulness*, the most uncompromising truthfulness'.¹⁶

¹⁶ Quoted by Alma Mahler in her *Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters* (3rd ed., London, 1973), p. 256.

In the same letter he wrote: ‘Forgive me. I cannot feel by halves. With me it is either one thing or the other!’ His former aversion now changed to admiration. Though already too decisively formed as a musical personality to be unduly influenced by Mahler’s idiom, he responded to the older composer with a passionate devotion, as if discovering in him a missing father-figure. He often visited him with Zemlinsky—now re-admitted to Mahler’s circle after an initial coolness because of his former relationship with Alma—although in its early stages the relationship remained a difficult one. As Alma recounts:¹⁷

[Schoenberg and Zemlinsky] used to come in the evening. After one of our devastatingly simple meals, all three went to the piano and talked shop—at first in all amity. Then Schoenberg let fall a word of youthful arrogance and Mahler corrected him with a shade of condescension—and the room was in an uproar. Schoenberg delighted in paradox of the most violent description. At least we thought so then; today I would listen with different ears. Mahler replied professorially. Schoenberg leapt to his feet and vanished with a curt good-night. Zemlinsky followed, shaking his head.

As soon as the door had shut behind them, Mahler said: ‘Tak care you never invite that conceited puppy into the house again’. On the stairs Schoenberg spluttered: ‘I shall never again cross that threshold’. But after a week or two Mahler said: ‘By the way, what’s become of those two?’¹⁸ I...lost no time in sending them an invitation; and they, who had only been waiting for it, lost no time in coming.

In March 1904 Schoenberg and Zemlinsky, with Bruno Walter and other young musicians, founded a Society of Creative Musicians (*Ver-einigung schaffender Tonkünstler*) ‘to give modern music a permanent home in Vienna, where it will be fostered’. With Guido Adler’s aid, Mahler was induced to become Honourary President and conductor-in-chief. The Society operated for only one season, 1904–5, but among other recent works it included the Viennese premieres of Mahler’s *Kindertotenlieder* and Strauss’s *Sinfonia Domestica*. On 23 January 1905 the two symphonic

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 78.

¹⁸ Mahler actually called them ‘that Eisele and Beisele’ after comic-strip characters of the time. The conjunction of the short, bald, bullet-headed Schoenberg with the even shorter, gnome-like, sharp-featured Zemlinsky was indeed a richly caricaturable one—see, for instance, the drawing by Emil Weiss among the illustrations for this book.

poems, Zemlinsky's *Die Seejungfrau* and Schoenberg's *Pelleas und Melisande*, received an extraordinary joint première, conducted by their respective composers, in the Vienna Musikvereinssaal. They were separated by a third premiere, a set of orchestral songs by the Secretary of the *Vereinigung*, Oscar von Posa, who also conducted his work. This extraordinarily expensive concert was partly underwritten by Adolf Loos, who was careful to conceal from Schoenberg his act of faith in him. The rehearsals did not go well: Schoenberg, not a natural conductor, was given a rough ride by the orchestra until Mahler appeared at one rehearsal, score in hand. At the concert, sections of the audience were openly hostile, and a subsequent newspaper review suggested Schoenberg should be locked up in a mental asylum. Nevertheless although *Die Seejungfrau* found more favour with the audience, *Pelleas und Melisande* was generally held to be the more striking work—especially by such important judges as Gustav and Alma Mahler. Alma wrote in her diary, dismissing her former lover: 'Zemlinsky, in spite of his many thoughts and charming inspirations . . . has not the strength of Schoenberg, who, for all his wrong-headedness, is a very original fellow. The audience kept leaving in droves and slamming doors behind them while the music was being played. There were whistles and cat-calls as well. But for us his talent was beyond question'.

This was perhaps the moment when Schoenberg's growing reputation decisively eclipsed that of his brother-in-law, who had so far been the more successful composer. Dissatisfied with *Die Seejungfrau*, Zemlinsky withdrew it. (The score was subsequently lost; it only resurfaced in the 1980s, since when performances have revealed its very genuine beauties.) Schoenberg's *Pelleas*, by contrast, was to receive a highly successful revival in Berlin only a few years later, under the baton of Oskar Fried. Even now he would still turn to Zemlinsky on occasion for advice on musical matters; but Zemlinsky's next major work—the opera *Der Traumgöрге*, commissioned by Mahler for the Hofoper—manifests clear Schoenbergian influences, especially the impress of *Pelleas*. (Schoenberg, a skilful bookbinder, made several sketchbooks for Zemlinsky to use for the opera, and was especially supportive of the project.)

Two months after the symphonic poems' joint première (which proved to be the last orchestral concert put on by the Society of Creative

Musicians, for it exhausted the funds), Mahler and Schoenberg had a discussion about musical form. Anton Webern was present, and noted Mahler's words:

Nature is for us the model in this realm. Just as in nature the entire universe has developed from the primeval cell, from plants, animals and men beyond to God, the Supreme Being, so also in music should a larger structure develop from a single motive in which is contained the germ of everything that is yet to be.¹⁹

This pronouncement profoundly impressed Webern. It will not have struck Schoenberg with quite such revelatory force—it was, after all, similar to the precepts he had long ago absorbed from Zemlinsky—but coming with such eloquence from a creative artist whom he now revered, it may well have impelled him to redouble his efforts to secure motivic unity in his works. It might even be thought to adumbrate the 'method of composition' that Schoenberg would develop and codify in the 1920s.

By now Schoenberg had settled down to a life of private teaching in his suburban flat, combined with hack-work for the recently founded Viennese music publishing house of Universal Edition, destined to become one of Europe's leading publishers of contemporary music. They were to be Schoenberg's own principal publishers for the next twenty years. However his lack of talent as a performer prevented him from earning money as a conductor or pianist, as Zemlinsky was able to do. Finances remained very tight, and he frequently had to rely on gifts or loans to keep going. The struggle to support his family was putting strains on the marriage. Relations with Mathilde were becoming difficult even in 1904–5, the period when he composed the huge String Quartet in D minor which he numbered as his First (the D major and its predecessors were long forgotten).

This work, completed in September 1905 while the family were on holiday at Gmunden on the Traunsee, aspired to the scale and something of the profundity of Beethoven's late quartets. But a secret programme

¹⁹Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, *Anton Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work* (London, 1979), p. 75.

underlay its its elaborate four-movements-in-one form. Schoenberg wrote in a sketch that the opening embodied a conflict, feelings of despair, fear of being overwhelmed. The outcome, however, was envisaged as positive: determination to start a new life induced, in the deeply lyrical slow movement, feelings of longing for those who had been abandoned, remorse for their pain—and, in the work's radiant epilogue, a vision of peace and harmony.

This was triumphantly achieved—in music at least, and seemingly for a while in the marriage. In September 1906 Mathilde bore their second child, a son—christened Georg after 'dreaming G \ddot{o} rge', the hero of his uncle Zemlinsky's opera. That summer, on holiday at Tegernsee, an ebullient Schoenberg had finished his First Chamber Symphony, one of his most optimistic works. It contained much that was new, including revolutionary harmonies based on chains of perfect fourths, but with it he felt that he had arrived at a settled style whose potential he would be happy to exploit and enjoy for many years. Its fifteen-piece orchestra showed he had turned away decisively from gigantic forces of the *Gurrelieder* and *Pelleas*. Instead, he was reshaping the harmonic vocabulary of late-Romanticism into a new and purposeful polyphonic language. He was also buoyed up by new ventures. He had begun to paint, under the instruction of a new friend, the rebellious young art student Richard Gerstl; and he had solid hopes of better financial conditions. The progressive Guido Adler was proposing to the government a radical reorganization of the Vienna Conservatoire, with Mahler as director and Schoenberg and Zemlinsky on the staff.

It was not to be. The stupefied incomprehension which greeted the D minor Quartet and the Chamber Symphony at their premi \acute{e} res early in 1907 were a foretaste of new struggles to come. Mahler, weary of the press campaigns and court intrigues against him, began to look away from Vienna for a permanent position, and meanwhile his contract at the Hofoper was cancelled. The first casualty of the affair was Zemlinsky's *Traumg \ddot{o} rge*: Felix Weingartner, taking up Mahler's post, shelved the premiere and the opera was never heard in its composer's lifetime. Moreover Zemlinsky, who had recently married, soon had to resign from a briefly held assistant conductorship at the Hofoper.

Schoenberg and Zemlinsky were among the crowd of nearly two hundred well-wishers who saw Mahler and Alma off at the Westbahnhof

on 9 December 1907, as they departed Vienna for Mahler's new post as conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. No doubt, like the critic Paul Stefan, they heard Gustav Klimt sigh, as the train pulled away, 'It's over!' Indeed it was. The 'scandal in the Bösendorfer Saal' was exactly a year away.



Consolidation

(1914–33)

*This was the time when everybody made believe he understood
Einstein's theories and Schoenberg's music.*

—('How One Becomes Lonely,' 1937)

SUMMER'S DAY NEAR TRAUNKIRCHEN IN THE SALZKAMMERGUT, towards the end of July 1921. Two men are taking a stroll in the country: Schoenberg, and Josef Rufer, one of the new generation of pupils that had come to him after the war. During the course of their walk Schoenberg turns to Rufer and declares: 'Today I have discovered something which will assure the supremacy of German music for the next hundred years.' It is a famous moment: he is referring to the 'method of composing with twelve notes related only to each other' employed in the Suite for piano on which he is working. A means of ensuring structural coherence in music within a totally chromatic idiom, its external features are simple and easily grasped but its implications far-reaching and easily misunderstood; to this day it remains the chief stumbling-block for his opponents, while mesmerizing many of his most fervent supporters. It is what the name 'Schoenberg' signifies to the public at large, even now: not so much a composer as the 'inventor' of a technique. And he was hardly one to deny the significance of that. Yet 'assure the supremacy of German music'? That has an oddly sinister ring; and it

is, in any case, a strange desire for an Austrian Jew, even one so deeply involved with Germanic musical tradition.

In fact, the closer one looks at Schoenberg's life in the years following the *Gurrelieder* premiere, the stranger it becomes. They had been unsettled, unsatisfying years with, apparently, little to show for them. Work had been interrupted time and again by the demands of teaching, touring and conducting, by ill-health, and most of all by the great upheavals of World War I.

The war turned artistic life in Germany upside down. Schoenberg's Berlin pupils all enlisted in the Prussian army. He himself, like so many of his contemporaries, was at first very enthusiastic, caught up in a tide of Germanic patriotism and a sense of Germany's cultural and therefore moral superiority to her enemies. But he detested the surrounding atmosphere: he was convinced that art had no place in the prevailing lunacy. He wrote to Zemlinsky in October 1914:

My colleagues ignore me more than ever. They hold patriotic artistic soirées in C major and 'still know factions'. What do you say to Maeterlinck? I feel that all this palaver of the so-called spiritual leaders of the people is highly superfluous because it is dilettantish and therefore trivial. Now the only language one can use is that of the gun and those who are unable to use this language should crawl into a corner and try to be inconspicuous...

By the beginning of 1915 he was growing disillusioned with what he called the 'war psychosis'. Writing again to Zemlinsky on 9 January he declared, 'Now I have only one wish: Peace!'

The Schoenbergs returned to Vienna in the summer of 1915, when Arnold was ordered to report for an army medical examination there. In December he was called up, and served the best part of an unhappy year in garrison duty. By all accounts he did his best to remain 'inconspicuous'. When asked by an officer if he was 'that controversial composer', he gave the famous reply, in rich Viennese dialect: 'Well sir, it's like this: Somebody had to be, and nobody else wanted to, so I took on the job myself.' The war's effect on him was deep, but did not find overt artistic expression. His own role in it must have seemed frustrating in the extreme. His health declined, he suffered from asthma attacks, and in September 1916, after a long wrangle with the Ministry of Defence

in Budapest¹ in which his pupils came to his assistance, he secured a release from military duties. Yet the following year he was called up once more—with disastrous effect on his major work of the period, the oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter* (Jacob's Ladder)—only to be discharged as physically unfit in December 1917. In April 1918 the family moved out to Mödling again, to a comfortable apartment on the Bernhardgasse which Schoenberg found with the help of his cousin Olga, the orphan of the Ring-theater, who also lived in Mödling. Olga had pursued a career as an actress and was being courted by an aristocratic cavalry officer, whom she would eventually marry, adopting the title of Countess Pascotini (in its full Ruritanian glory, Pascotini-Juriskovic von Hagendorf und Ehrenfels).

As the war staggered to a close, there were the inevitable money worries, the necessity of earning a living by teaching. In 1919 Schoenberg was taking fourteen pupils (including Hanns Eisler, Rudolf Kolisch, Olga Novakovic, Paul Pisk, Karl Rankl, Rudolf Serkin, Lisette Seybert, and Victor Ullmann) individually in composition, harmony, counterpoint, and analysis five or six days a week from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. His students travelled from Vienna to Mödling on the steam-driven or electric street-cars; or when—as often—these were not running, they hiked the fifteen kilometres there and back. Webern moved to Mödling in 1918, and he and Schoenberg would go on long walks together on Sundays. Among the new students, Felix Greissle, who joined Schoenberg in 1920, fell in love with his teacher's daughter Trudi. They were married at the end of 1921 and spent their first year together living rent-free either with the Schoenbergs or with Countess Pascotini, as Greissle was then unemployed.

With his customary energy, Schoenberg threw himself into the task of revivifying Viennese musical life. In November 1918 he founded a *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen*: a Society for Private Musical Performances. This notable organization drew the core of its performers and membership from his circle of pupils and friends, and gave weekly concerts of chamber music featuring contemporary works in thoroughly prepared performances (fifty hours' rehearsal per work was not unusual!) by the finest players and singers. To ensure the audience's maximum

¹ As Schoenberg's father had come from Bratislava (Hungarian Pozsony, Austrian Pressburg), he inherited Hungarian nationality for administrative purposes, which became Czech nationality when Czechoslovakia was formed in 1918.

comprehension, unfamiliar works were usually repeated two, three or more times in a season; participation by young artists was encouraged; programmes were not made known in advance; all applause, or expression of disapproval, was forbidden; and music critics were excluded.

Schoenberg, as the Society's President, was closely involved in all its activities and wielded absolute, dictatorial powers. (In later years he would joke that even before Mussolini he had, through the Society, become Europe's first dictator.) Gossip named it the 'Vienna Schoenberg Society'—yet in the first season he forbade performance of any of his works. Catholicity of taste was one of the Society's guiding principles. Its four years of existence (December 1918–December 1922) saw the production of over 150 different works, including pieces by composers as diverse as Bartók, Berg, Bittner, Busoni, Debussy, Dukas, Hauer, Kodály, Korngold, Mahler, Milhaud, Pijper, Ravel, Reger, Satie, Franz Schmidt, Schreker, Cyril Scott, Scriabin, Stravinsky, Josef Suk, Webern, Wellesz, and Zemlinsky—in fact whoever, in Schoenberg's words, 'had a real face or name'. Most of the participating musicians were from Schoenberg's circle, even including his old friend Oskar Adler, who contributed performances of violin works by Reger, Debussy and Webern.

Quite apart from the direct educational effect on audience and players, awakening interest in new musical ideas, the Society helped to re-establish musical links with other countries that had been broken by the war. (A separate Prague *Verein* was established in 1922, with Zemlinsky as chairman and Schoenberg as honorary president.) It was a forerunner of the more ambitious Modern Music organizations which grew up in Europe and America in the later 1920s; and to some extent it provided them with a model.

Yet all these upsets and activities cannot entirely explain the fact that, in the years since *Pierrot Lunaire*, apart from a few occasional pieces, Schoenberg had completed only one new work: the *Vier Orchesterlieder*, Op. 22, lasting about ten minutes in all, which had taken him nearly four years. He had, of course, composed much more than that, but the substantial completed portion of *Die Jakobsleiter* had been the fruit of a few feverish months—months of hardship, with money desperately short and little food or fuel to cook it, part of the time spent trailing from one cheap lodging-house to the next. All such aggravating factors apart, Schoenberg

must have been finding composition itself more difficult; he knew the direction he wanted to take, but had not found the means by which to move onwards. The basis of this difficulty is examined more fully in Chapter 6. For the meantime, we may simply suggest that in it he had arrived intuitively, and largely involuntarily, at a radically new kind of music in a bewilderingly short space of time; and that since the spiritual and emotional conditions which had driven him then no longer obtained, he needed to provide a 'logical' basis, a conceptual framework, for what he had created, before he could extend it further.

He found it (or thought he had—the result is the same) in the twelve-note method,² where every theme, harmony or accompaniment is related to a particular succession of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale; to create, in effect, a continuous process of variation on the distinct configuration provided by the twelve-note row. He had taken steps in this direction as early as 1914, in the long-abandoned sketches for the choral symphony; and again in *Die Jakobsleiter*, which had grown out of that project—but clearly he had not recognized their full significance.

Other influences, or parallel developments, helped to nudge him further along the path. One was the ideas (rather, perhaps, than the works) of Josef Matthias Hauer, nine years younger than Schoenberg. As early as 1919 Hauer had developed a special 'twelve-note' notation, with extra staves to accommodate all the chromatic notes without accidentals, and was developing a theory of music composed according to 'tropes' of the twelve pitches, divided into two hexachords (six-note groups) of unfixed ordering. This was probably rather in advance of Schoenberg's development of his 'method of composition with twelve tones related only to one another'. Schoenberg and Hauer were in contact; Schoenberg's *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen* sponsored performances of Hauer's works; they discussed collaborating on a theoretical pamphlet. It's by no means inconceivable that Hauer influenced the development of Schoenberg's method, though one only has to listen to his music to realize that the influence would have been slight indeed. Their aesthetic and practice (to say nothing of their respective gifts) were entirely different, as was their fate. For Schoenberg the row, the specific ordering of the twelve pitches, was a means to an end, a starting-point for composition. For Hauer it was

² For the essentials of which see Chapter 6.

very largely the end in itself, a unique object of ‘melic’ contemplation. His ‘game’ with the tones³ is in a sense one-dimensional; Schoenberg’s ‘method’ was nothing if not multi-layered.

Another influence, perhaps (and if so, more in attitude than example), was Hauer’s exact contemporary Anton Webern. Webern was to be the first disciple to embrace Schoenberg’s method.

It is beyond doubt, however, that the discovery of the method had a liberating effect on Schoenberg. He found himself able to bring works to completion; he could see his way forward; it did not cramp his invention; he felt freer to follow his fantasy than he had in years. ‘So far,’ he wrote to Hauer in 1923,

I have found no mistake and the method keeps on growing of its own accord, without my doing anything about it. This I consider a good sign. In this way I find myself positively enabled to compose as freely and fantastically as one otherwise does only in one’s youth. (Letter 78)

They had been years of personal and spiritual difficulties, too.⁴ Still officially Lutheran, his Christian beliefs had not lasted. Under the strain of the crisis of 1908–9 and then the events of the war, religion had indeed become a major solace, but it was an extremely personal kind of religion—what he called ‘the Faith of the Disillusioned’—with a

³ Hauer has been claimed as a model for the ‘Magister Ludi’ in Herman Hesse’s novel *Das Glasperlenspiel* (*The Glass Bead Game*). A further, as yet unassessed parallel development is that of Fritz Heinrich Klein (1892–1972), who became Alban Berg’s pupil in 1921 after a year studying with Schoenberg. Klein is said to have been experimenting with a personal variety of 12-note technique even before 1921, when he began composing a series of what he termed ‘extonal’ works starting with *Die Maschine* (published 1923), described as ‘Eine extonale Selbstsatire’. This work includes a row comprising all the available intervals as well as all the chromatic notes, and has been claimed—by Steffen Schleiermacher in CD liner notes to his recording on MDG Scene 613 1475–2 (2007)—as ‘the very first printed twelve-note composition’. According to Schleiermacher Schoenberg rejected Klein’s work for performance in the *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen*, without explanation.

⁴ It seems that early in 1920 Mathilde may have had a new affair, with a young pupil of Schoenberg’s, Hugo Breuer, who subsequently left Schoenberg and became an adherent of Hauer. The chief evidence for this is found in the letters of Alban and Hélène Berg. See Raymond Coffey, ‘Soap Opera and Genius in the Second Viennese School’, *Peabody News* (March/April 2005), pp. 22–4. Coffey suggests that this affair is among the many private Schoenbergian matters encoded in the slow movement of Berg’s Chamber Concerto, and has further tentatively suggested some sort of liaison may have existed between Mathilde and Berg himself.

Judaeo-Christian background modified by his reading of Strindberg and Swedenborg. The metaphysical poem *Totentanz der Prinzipien* (Death-Dance of the Principles), completed in 1915 and originally intended for setting in the choral symphony, examines the course of human existence and finds it wanting, material considerations 'leaving the spiritual eye blind'. In *Die Jakobsleiter*, the text of which was begun shortly after completing the *Totentanz*, Schoenberg depicts people at different stages of spiritual growth, being judged in the after-life and prepared for reincarnation into the turmoil of the world.

Nor, he found, was he ever able to forget his Jewishness: he was hardly allowed to. The virulent criticism to which his musical activities were always subjected in the Vienna press began, even before the war, to take an undisguisedly anti-Semitic tone. Mahler before him had experienced the same thing. The double paradox of being an apostate among Jews, but a Jew among Gentiles, must have increased Schoenberg's sense of spiritual isolation, yet magnified his feelings of solidarity with his own race.

In June 1921, following a 'merry evening' of Strauss waltzes at the *Verein*,⁵ Schoenberg took his family to Mattsee, near Salzburg, to spend the summer. He was in good spirits, and felt at last near the solution of his compositional problems. He looked forward to a summer's hard creative work—perhaps even completing *Die Jakobsleiter*. But the times were unsettled: all travellers were required to register with the civil authorities. After only a few days, Schoenberg was visited by a deputation from the town council. Jews, he was informed, were no longer welcome in Mattsee; but of course, if Herr Schoenberg could give proof of Christian baptism. . . . He had left his baptism papers in Vienna; but in any case he refused to demean himself by producing them. The family left Mattsee immediately, and eventually found accommodation in Traunkirchen. So it was *here*, soon afterwards, that he told Rufer of his discovery which would 'ensure the supremacy of German music'; and by his own admission (in an important Letter [64] to Kandinsky, of May 1923) he was extremely bitter at the time:

⁵ The waltzes were specially arranged by Berg, Webern, and Schoenberg, all of whom took part in performing them (Schoenberg as second violin) along with Steuermann, Kolisch and others. The manuscripts of the arrangements were then auctioned to raise money for future concerts.

Must not a Kandinsky have an inkling of what really happened when I had to break off my first working summer for five years, leave the place I had sought out for peace of mind to work in, and afterwards couldn't regain the peace of mind to work? Because the Germans will not put up with Jews!⁶

A question-mark, at least, ought to remain over the phrase 'the supremacy of German music'. Could not Schoenberg's remark have had an ironic dimension? He had lighted, in his searchings, on a highly versatile compositional device, germane to his own creative needs, which any other real composer might take, leave or adapt at will. But his awakening re-identification with the plight of the Jewish people—soon after Mattsee he began taking an interest in the Zionist movement, and in 1924, in his essay 'Position on Zionism', he was viewing as desirable the 're-establishment of a Jewish State', if necessary by force of arms—enabled him to view dispassionately his own deep Austro-German culture. He may have recognized that in the Germanic mind, with its love of system and authority, this device was fatally easy to misinterpret as a law to be obeyed rather than a tool to be applied: as a magic formula which could take the place of hard and true creative work.

The possibility (which is all it is) is worth entertaining. It would help to explain why Schoenberg never formulated a detailed theory of twelve-note music; why, though he gave a few lectures on its application in specific works, he refused to teach it to his pupils and did not care how they composed, as long as the result was musical and craftsmanlike; why he was so touchy about musicians and writers outside his immediate circle handling the idea, referred to it jokingly as 'purely a family affair' and made curious attempts to have it recognized as his own 'intellectual property'. After all, in a few years' time he was to apply the

⁶ The whole text of this letter is a penetrating analysis of the prevalent Austrian and German anti-Semitism and where it was likely to lead, which shows Schoenberg to have been about a decade in advance of most of his colleagues in political awareness. Kandinsky was the rather puzzled recipient of the correspondence because Alma Mahler—now married to the architect Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus in Weimar—had relayed to Schoenberg that the Bauhaus artists harboured anti-Semitic tendencies and illustrated this with an alleged remark by Kandinsky. In this she was mistaken, if not intentionally malicious. The former friendship between the composer and the painter was seriously damaged, though relations became more cordial again from about 1928.

method in an opera (*Moses und Aron*) about the difficulty of communicating the essence of an idea, when people are so willing to be satisfied with superficial details. Fortunately, he was to gain a position where he could influence at least the preliminary stages of the revolution in musical technique which began as soon as his new method became known.

Before that happened, however, his circumstances showed no great improvement. He suffered, as all suffered, during the raging inflation that overtook Austria in 1922–3, though he laboured mightily to assist friends in need in any way he could. He saw no abatement in the anti-Jewish mood of the times and by 1923 was already aware of the danger represented by Hitler, against whose demagoguery he explicitly warned Kandinsky in the letter already quoted.

That year another blow fell. Mathilde had been more or less permanently unwell since 1920, and in September 1923, while they were on holiday in Traunsee, she fell ill, apparently of a liver and gall bladder complaint. She had to be conveyed to Vienna by ambulance and was admitted directly to a sanatorium in the Auerspergstrasse, where she was discovered to have a malignant tumour. She lived only another four weeks, while Schoenberg stayed close at hand, as the guest of the family of his pupil Lisette Seybert, until Mathilde died on 22 October. Whatever tribulations the marriage had been through, a moving letter written on 16 November to Zemlinsky (who had been too upset to attend his sister's funeral) leaves no question of the tenderness of Schoenberg's feelings towards her, nor of his sense of loss:

I was very sorry that you did not come to the funeral: I cannot tell you how sorry. But I fully understood, because I remembered your agitation when you saw Mathilde for the last time. On the contrary, I still have to thank you many times for your dear and friendly words. . . .

We are gradually beginning to settle down. This, of course, does not come to pass smoothly. Mathilde's arrangements were so clear and simple, she knew how to solve complicated difficulties with a few words, and always virtually without a sound. Trudi, of course, is still far from being equal to this task although she is really very capable and good and has the best will in the world. . . . Görgi too is very good. I am sure that Greissle too is a kind

and good human being.⁷ They are all trying very hard to make things easy for me. However, it may be that I am very irritable and it is not always easy therefore to get on with me. Moreover, Mathilde always knew how to restore peace by mollifying him who was easiest to mollify, without regard to justice. Perhaps I need someone who, at the right moment, will dare to tell me that I am in the wrong even when I am in the right. However, no other human being will ever again wield this authority. Now one has to think about many things the existence of which one was not previously aware of. So one gradually loses this human being, whom one hitherto merely ('merely!') regarded as the person to whom one was attached for inexplicable reasons, also as a value. This is less painful and also has the good point that one is frequently reminded of her.

Schoenberg completed a long poem, *Requiem*, intended as a 'monument' to Mathilde's memory, and spoke of his intention to set it to music. But this work was destined to remain uncomposed. He found it impossible to come to terms with his sense of loss, or with a solitary life. As the letter just quoted indicates, his daughter Trudi and her family had moved in with him to keep him company. They found Schoenberg chain-smoking, drinking heavily, and dependent on opium tablets.

However at New Year 1924 he held a party for close friends, including Marie Pappenheim and the members of the Kolisch Quartet, led by his pupil Rudolf Kolisch. Kolisch's sister Gertrud was also present; and though she was half the composer's age Schoenberg quickly warmed to this talented and strikingly good looking young woman who, moreover, responded to his affection with reciprocal warmth and humour. Within eight months they were engaged. Writing to Zemlinsky on 21 August to announce this unexpected turn of events, Schoenberg himself seemed bewildered by it:

... Need I tell you that I myself do not understand how it is possible that I can love another woman after Mathilde? And that I torture myself with the thought that I am disparaging her memory? Will you understand me and be

⁷ Görgi' is Schoenberg's seventeen-year-old Georg, referred to here by the diminutive which alludes to Zemlinsky's still-unperformed opera *Der Traumgöрге*. Felix Greissle was now Schoenberg's son-in-law.

indulgent with me? I know that you are too magnanimous not to realize that it is perhaps precisely because I loved Mathilde so very much that this gap must somehow be filled, and that I shall certainly never cease remembering her and shall never forget what she meant to me and what I owe to her.

They were married a week later, in Mödling, and spent their honeymoon in Venice. It was to prove a happy and productive union. Gertrud was a keen (and expert) tennis-player—she features as ‘Tennis-Fr.[aulein]’ on some of the sketches for the light-hearted Suite, Op. 29 which he now began to compose—and she awakened in her husband an enthusiasm for the game which would endure for the rest of his life.

The sudden remarriage caused some initial problems, however. Schoenberg’s son and daughter naturally found it difficult to accept Gertrud’s role. Zemlinsky seems to have had no inkling of what was afoot when he worked with Schoenberg in June, conducting the long-delayed premiere of *Erwartung* in Prague; he was mortally offended that his erstwhile brother-in-law should remarry before the traditional year of mourning for Mathilde was over. For several years, their old friendship was reduced to a shadow of its former self. Thus it was probably with a certain relief that Schoenberg, for the third time in his life, moved to Berlin in January 1926—a transit very different from the preceding ones. He had been seriously considering a move to the USSR, still at that time comparatively tolerant of the latest musical developments, for in 1925 he was offered a position at the Moscow Conservatory, but changed his mind when he was appointed director of the Masterclass in Composition at the Prussian Academy of Arts, in succession to Busoni, who had died in July 1924 at the age of fifty-eight. (Despite their differences, Schoenberg had been deeply upset by Busoni’s death.) The Composition Masterclass was very much an ‘advanced’ course, in which an acknowledged master imparted his wisdom and experience to a small circle of young but already proven composers. By this appointment, Berlin was recognizing the fifty-year-old Schoenberg as a figure of international eminence, both as composer and teacher.

This third sojourn in Berlin (1926–33) was in some respects the happiest period of Schoenberg’s life; it certainly provided the best conditions of work. The city, having quickly recovered from the disastrous years of inflation, was at this time a brilliant metropolis, one of the chief centres of

European music. Wilhelm Furtwängler conducted the Berlin Philharmonic, Erich Kleiber was music director of the Staatsoper, Bruno Walter of the Charlottenberg Opera, Klemperer was active at the Krolloper. Franz Schreker was director of the Charlottenberg Hochschule für Musik, with Artur Schnabel, Paul Hindemith, Carl Flesch, and Gregor Piatigorsky on its staff. Zemlinsky arrived in 1927 to take up the somewhat demeaning position of Klemperer's assistant at the Krolloper; but his contacts with Schoenberg remained sporadic. To their personal disagreements was now added a fundamental divergence of opinion over the twelve-note method, whose validity Zemlinsky could not accept.

At the Academy of Arts, Schoenberg found the atmosphere congenial enough. As a Senator of the Academy he had, and took, a hand in its general administration. In his own field he was allowed sole responsibility for the way he ran his courses, and with Josef Rufer and Roberto Gerhard taking over the more mundane tasks as his assistants, he was able to devote his time to the finer compositional problems in which he was particularly able to help his students. Moreover, he was required to teach for an average of only six months per year. His rate of composition naturally increased and he was able to secure performances for nearly all his new works, though the receptions accorded to such major scores as the *Orchestral Variations* (1926–8) and the comic opera *Von heute auf morgen* (1928–9) were very mixed. With a still-growing international reputation, more commissions came his way, notably for his *Third String Quartet*, commissioned by the noted American patroness of chamber music, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Schoenberg's quartet was premiered in Vienna by Kolisch's Wiener Quartet as part of an invitation concert entirely devoted to works written for Mrs Coolidge, including the *Canticum Fratris Solis* by Charles Martin Loeffler and another, very different world première—the *Trittico Botticelliano* of Respighi.

Schoenberg now enjoyed a pleasant social life which included such old friends as Adolf Loos; and he and his wife were able to indulge his new-found passion for tennis. Franz Schreker, the first conductor of the *Gurrelieder*, whom Schoenberg had initially seen as a rival, had by this period become a friend and colleague. Indeed Schreker, who had been head of the Hochschule since 1920, had exerted his influence to secure the Academy position for Schoenberg. They shared several students, such as Paul Amadeus Pisk and Rudolf Kolisch; and some of Schreker's

students, including Ernst Krenek and Jascha Horenstein, developed close ties to the Schoenberg circle. The libretto of Schoenberg's twelve-note 'bourgeois comedy' *Von heute auf morgen* was written by Gertrud under the pseudonym of 'Max Blonda' and is apparently based on an incident involving Schreker and his wife. For his part Schreker sought Schoenberg's advice while writing his most stylistically advanced opera, *Christophorus, oder die Vision eine Oper* (1924–8), whose protagonist is a composer, and he dedicated the work 'to Arnold Schoenberg in friendship'.⁸

Vienna pupils such as Rufer, Roberto Gerhard, and Winfried Zillig followed Schoenberg to Berlin. There he attracted others: not only Germans such as Walter Goehr and Peter Schacht, but also Alfred Keller and Erich Schmid from Switzerland, Norbert von Hannenheim from the German-speaking region of Romania, the Americans Marc Blitzstein and Adolf Weiss, the Greek Nikos Skalkottas, the Russian Natalie Pravosudovich, and the Polish-German Josef Zmigrod, destined to be a successful film composer under the name 'Allan Gray'. Roberto Gerhard, at least, found the change from Vienna to Berlin very much to his taste—

... given not only the difference between Vienna and Berlin in those pregnant Twenties, but also the difference between single and communal tuition with Schoenberg—the difference, that is, between being a private pupil of the master and being a member of the *Meisterklasse*. Irresistibly, I'm afraid, some of us felt at times a little pompous about that. As members of the *Meisterklasse* we rather looked down on the undergraduate population of the Charlottenburg Hochschule für Musik. In fact, we very much played up to our higher academic status as *Meisterschüler*. In retaliation, the Hochschule referred to us, I believe, as *die Meistersinger von Schoenberg*.⁹

The classes generally took place at Schoenberg's flat at Nürnberger Platz No. 3. As before, his teaching centred on the work of the classical masters; but, as Erich Schmid recalled,

⁸ The première of *Christophorus* was banned by the Nazis and the work was only heard for the first time in 1978. In recent productions the main character has been made up to resemble Schoenberg.

⁹ 'Reminiscences of Schoenberg', *Perspectives of New Music*, Spring–Summer 1975. Now reprinted in *Gerhard on Music: Selected Writings*, edited by Meirion Bowen (Aldershot, 2000) p. 108.

The classes were not lectures. They were discussion groups led by Schoenberg. . . . We had to play everything we discussed on the piano, sometimes four-hands. We also played our own compositions and works like Beethoven's string quartets. It was important to Schoenberg to see how we made music. He had us play a theme. Schoenberg demanded clear articulation. Thus, we not only studied composition with him but we also learned a considerable amount of interpretation.¹⁰

He also encouraged his pupils to discuss and criticize each other's scores before coming to him—to cultivate the same uncompromising honesty of judgement he used with himself and towards them.

Schoenberg did not teach the twelve-note method, and seldom discussed any aspect of it in class. On the rare occasions when he pointed to features in his recent works, it was never their twelve-note technique that was commented upon. Schmid again:

It seldom happened that he played anything from his own works. When he did, he always stressed how his own style had developed from existing tradition. I remember our looking at his first Chamber Symphony. . . . Another time, we examined the Wind Quintet op. 26. Schoenberg used this complicated work to show how he integrated classical formal principles in his own style. . . . It is very interesting that he never spoke about twelve-tone technique. . . .¹¹

On the other hand he did not stop pupils using it—or any other idiom—so long as the results were musical. At least one pupil (perhaps Norbert von Hannenheim, the only one who composed exclusively in the twelve-note method even while Schoenberg's student) found his first steps in serialism criticized for being too stiff, and 'corrected' by the master's hand with blatant disregard for the method's supposed 'rules'! Erich Schmid once brought to class a twelve-note string quartet he was writing. Schoenberg:

immediately got inside the work and showed us how thematic developments should really proceed. There was a certain rigidity in the piece that

¹⁰ 'Schoenberg's Way', p. 269.

¹¹ '... my duty to defend the truth': Erich Schmid in Schoenberg's Berlin Composition Class' by Chris Walton, *Tempo* No. 218, October 2001, p. 16. Quotations from Schmid in this article are translated by Walton partly from Schmid's reminiscences published in *Melos*, July/August 1974, pp. 190–203 and partly from his unpublished memoirs.

he thereby immediately dispelled. . . . There was a particular thematic development that he did not like. He made a suggestion that meant using a different sequence of notes. I mentioned shyly that my composition was written using the twelve-tone system . . .

Schoenberg's rejoinder was: 'Well, then you'll have to change the row, won't you?!'¹² Alfred Keller recalled a very rare occasion on which, criticizing an overly complicated composition by a student, Schoenberg

took out the score of the [twelve-note] Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31 and showed us in musical examples how such difficulties might be overcome. He concluded his performance by saying, 'This is how I handled it. But it can also be handled differently. You should, and even must, do it differently—each in his own way.'¹³

Even so he appears to have had a profound disagreement with Nikos Skalkottas (the circumstances are obscure) over the latter's free personal adaptation of twelve-note principles, using not one but several tone-rows in the course of a composition.

Between 1926 and 1927 one of Schoenberg's principal creative endeavours was not musical but literary—the three-act drama *Der Biblische Weg* (The Biblical Way), on which he worked intensively, producing sketches for staging and suggestions for incidental music as well as a complete text. Reflecting his growing interest in the Zionist project, the play is also an embodiment of Schoenberg's recurrent theme of the timeless, spiritual Idea that is endangered and compromised by its Presentation within the contemporary, material world. The principal character, Max Aruns—described at one point as 'Moses and Aron in one and the same person'—negotiates with the ruler of a fictional African country to establish a New Palestinian state within his lands and struggles to unify the various competing Jewish interests and factions, 'orthodox and assimilationist, socialist and capitalist'. The state is established, but lapses into dissensions and intrigue as the different vested interests fall from the Ideal or attempt to turn it to their particular interpretation. The play ends with the New Palestine in crisis, threatened by external enemies, as the inhabitants riot and Aruns is killed by the mob. But his last words are:

¹² Ibid., p. 17.

¹³ 'Schoenberg's Way', p. 270.

‘I shall die in peace, for I know that You will always provide our nation with men ready to offer their lives for this concept of the one and only, eternal, invisible and unimaginable God’. Schoenberg approached Max Reinhardt, among others, to try to arrange a performance, but *Der Biblische Weg* was neither published nor staged in his lifetime. It forms, however, an important imaginative stage towards the opera *Moses und Aron* on which he would soon embark. Not only are the characters and roles of Moses and his brother frequently evoked in the play’s dialogue, but Aruns’s dying words already adumbrate the opening speech, and the guiding concept, of the opera.

Much of Schoenberg’s free time away from the Academy was consumed in travelling, conducting, and lecturing; a process which aided his growing reputation abroad. He had visited Denmark, Holland, and Italy in the early 1920s; now he moved further afield, to Britain, France, Spain, and Switzerland. His old pupil Edward Clark, now officially Music Programme Builder of the B.B.C., was a valuable champion in Britain, and persuaded Schoenberg to come to conduct the British premieres of the *Gurrelieder* and *Erwartung*. On the former occasion (January 1928) he was in his most relaxed form, and made an excellent impression: not least on a composer about his own age, Havergal Brian, who reported on the rehearsals in glowing terms for the journal *Musical Opinion*:

Schoenberg’s merry black eyes pierce like an eagle—they are mirrors of his mind. He misses nothing in his vast orchestral apparatus at rehearsal. In a *tutti* passage he will detect a mistake on a particular instrument, and loses no time in correcting it in excellent English. He has a droll sense of humour, as was shown... when the four Wagner tubas failed to enter, he jokingly shouted ‘Good morning!’¹⁴

Another activity in which he engaged was radio broadcasting, especially for Berlin Radio, on which he gave several talks, mainly but not exclusively about his own music. He was an excellent broadcaster, able to use a wealth of musical illustration to demonstrate formal subtleties, eschewing jargon or abstruse discussion of technique in favour of direct,

¹⁴ ‘Schönberg: Triumph at the B.B.C. National Concerts’, *Musical Opinion*, March 1928, pp. 597–9.

concrete, everyday images that the common listener could understand. He was much interested, too, in the possibilities inherent in films, and wrote an 'imaginary' soundtrack, the *Begleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene*, which showed how well the twelve-note method could depict changing emotions and situations. Nearly all his works during this period show a confident exploration of the possibilities and broadening of the expressive range of the method: in the enriched and intensified 'classical' style of the Third String Quartet, the male-voice sound-world of the Choruses Op. 35, and the progressively larger structures of the Orchestral Variations, *Von Heute auf Morgen* and—biggest of all—*Moses und Aron*. This opera, whose libretto he had written in 1928, was begun in 1930; it was the largest piece of music yet based on a single series of twelve notes, and a dramatic parable of his own situation. Like *Der Biblische Weg*, it marks another stage in Schoenberg's rapprochement with Jewish traditions.

Only failing health curtailed his manifold activities. He found it necessary to spend longer and longer periods in the south. This tendency culminated in the Schoenbergs' staying in Barcelona from October 1931 to May 1932 as guests of Roberto Gerhard and his wife. It was a very happy period, one of the few in his life where he was able to unbend completely. He played much tennis, and was warmly received by Catalan musicians, notably Pablo Casals, for whom he had an enormous regard. It was for Casals that he composed a Cello Concerto, based on a concerto by the eighteenth-century Viennese composer Monn, and eagerly looked forward to conducting it with Casals as soloist. For his part, Casals devoted much time to learning this extraordinarily taxing work, but the eventual publishers of the score put such financial obstacles in the way of performance that he never played it in public.

It was in Barcelona that Schoenberg composed much of Act II of *Moses und Aron*. He never required quietness to work—indeed, he preferred to hear people round about him—and it is odd to think that he wrote some of the deeply tragic final scene of Act II at a window overlooking the sunlit city, one ear cocked to the gossip of his wife and Mrs Gerhard chatting in the room behind him, always ready to take part if he felt inclined. The sojourn was crowned on 7 May 1932 by the birth of Gertrud's first child, a daughter who was named Dorothea Nuria in honour of Barcelona's patron saint.

But this comparative idyll had to come to an end—Schoenberg's presence in Berlin was urgently requested by the Academy, and though he would rather not have returned, as he put it, to take his chances 'among the swastika-swaggerers and pogromists'¹⁵ he realized he was losing ground there in the worsening political climate. Franz Schreker had already been ousted from the Directorship of the Hochschule für Musik and had begun a masterclass of his own at the Academy of Arts. Schoenberg returned north, therefore, when he was declared fit enough to travel; and though the cold Berlin climate affected him as usual he decided to fulfil his contractual obligations by remaining there through the following winter. He watched the deteriorating political situation with grim interest; but after the general elections gave the Nazi Party a majority in the Reichstag, the writing was on the wall.

Adolf Hitler became Chancellor on 30 January 1933. Just over a week later the veteran composer Paul Graener led a walkout by staff of the Hochschule from a concert of music by Schoenberg's pupils, which they claimed was an insult to German culture. On 1 March, a few days after the burning of the Reichstag, the President of the Academy, Max von Schillings, announced in its Senate that the Führer had resolved to 'break the Jewish stranglehold on Western music'. Schoenberg, treating this as an immediate dismissal, stormed out, shouting: 'This sort of thing you don't need to say to me twice!' There was never any doubt that he would openly declare himself against the regime: he is reported to have said to the philosopher Adorno about this time, 'Today there are more important things than Art.'

On 30 May the Prussian Ministry of Culture revoked its contracts with Schoenberg and Schreker, violating an agreement supposed to last until 1935. Schreker, in poor health, died a broken man in Berlin the following year. But Schoenberg had already left the country. Webern had suggested he return to Vienna, but he knew there could be no lasting safety there. Instead he made his way first to Paris, where he looked for a publisher for his recent works, and conducting opportunities—without luck. On 24 July—no doubt partly as a display of solidarity with his increasingly endangered race, but more significantly as the natural outcome of his spiritual development throughout the last twenty years—he was

¹⁵ Letter 142.

received back into the Jewish faith, at a modest ceremony in the Union Libérale Israélite, witnessed by the painter Marc Chagall. 'Religion,' commented one newspaper editorial in his native Vienna, 'has once again been defiled.' Schoenberg urged Zemlinsky to follow suit, but the latter refrained from deliberately aggravating the precariousness of his position and merely abandoned Berlin for Vienna. They seem to have had little or no contact for the next five years.

Not long afterwards Schoenberg completed another concerto founded on a Baroque original, the Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra after Handel, a *tour-de-force* of high good humour; but publishers and concerts failed to materialize. Although he had made arrangements to settle in Paris, at the last minute he thought better of this course and accepted an offer of a teaching position at a small conservatoire in Boston, Massachusetts, run by the Russian-born cellist Joseph Malkin. Schoenberg apparently believed that in the United States he would be better placed to further the schemes that now occupied his unfailingly fertile brain. Chief among these was a plan to found a new United Jewish Party to 'rescue the Jewish People' from the disaster he now saw threatening them, with an associated newspaper to mobilize opinion against Fascism. He envisaged this party as something like a religious cult based on the idea of the 'chosen' people, with a 'militant, aggressive' and 'national-chauvinistic' programme, but at the same time entirely dissociated from Zionism *per se*. Thus on 25 October Schoenberg, now in his sixtieth year, set out for America on the French liner *Ile de France* with his wife and baby daughter.¹⁶ He would never see Europe again.

¹⁶ Because of their straitened circumstances the shipping line allowed Schoenberg to travel on half fare, Gertrud on quarter fare, and Nuria without charge. They were only charged the full fare on their small terrier, Witz.

*In the Wilderness*

(1933–51)

There's a picture of a man who has run over a child, which is lying dead in front of his car. He clutches his head in despair, but not to say anything like 'My God, what have I done!' For there is a caption saying: 'Sorry, now it is too late to worry—take out your policy at the XX Insurance Company in time.' And these are the people I'm supposed to teach composition to!

—Letter to Oskar Kokoschka, 1946

AFTER THEIR ATLANTIC CROSSING (ON WHICH THEIR CHIEF COMPANION had been the conductor Artur Bodzansky, an old friend of Schoenberg's since the 1890s) the family disembarked in New York on 31 October 1933. There was no welcoming committee, but Fritz Kreisler was waiting for them at customs. Also a composer and journalist called Lehman Engel had learned from a newspaper that Schoenberg was arriving in the United States and had taken it on himself to meet Schoenberg off the ship, conduct an interview, and give him a message of welcome from some of his colleagues. Schoenberg thanked him for his kindness, to which Engel replied 'You're welcome'—at which Schoenberg shed tears at the thought of actually being made welcome in this new, strange country.¹

¹ The story is recounted by Milton Babbitt, who was a friend of Engel: see 'The Twelve-Tone Tradition' in *Words About Music* ed. Stephen Dembski and Joseph N. Straus (Des Moines, 1987), p. 5.

In fact his name was known and held in some honour in American musical circles, but almost entirely by reputation rather than much direct knowledge of his music. There were exceptions—as a young student the composer Roger Sessions had been able to study Schoenberg's piano pieces as early as 1913, the Op. 16 Orchestral Pieces were performed by Karl Muck in Boston not long afterwards, the *Harmonielehre* was known to some progressive teachers, some enlightened articles about Schoenberg had appeared during the First World War by such writers as Walter Kramer in the journal *Musical America*, there had been isolated performances of *Pierrot Lunaire* and other works. But the most significant event of Schoenberg reception to occur before Schoenberg himself arrived in the United States had been Leopold Stokowski's American premiere of the *Gurrelieder* with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Paul Althouse as Walde-mar. In all he conducted three performances of Schoenberg's early masterpiece at the Metropolitan Opera House in Philadelphia in April 1932: all three concerts were recorded by the RCA Victor Company and two were subsequently issued on record with an explanatory talk by the conductor.²

Despite these indications of American interest, Schoenberg's experience of exile in the United States—even though this period saw the creation of some of his finest works—could hardly be regarded as the crown of his professional career or his international reputation. He was never as financially secure as he had been in Berlin, his health was increasingly precarious, and he found the whole atmosphere alien to him. He was used to being a prophet without honour in his own country, but now he found himself accorded little more honour in his country of adoption, let alone elsewhere in the world.

The first year in the United States was a trying one. Joseph Malkin's 'Conservatoire' proved to be just a few rooms in a house in Boston, with only a few pupils. He had only founded the school the previous year, and had hoped the name of Schoenberg would attract more, but was too late in advertising his courses. Schoenberg was required to teach both in

² One of these—the performance of 9 April—was recorded at thirty-three-and-a-third rpm and issued in a pioneering 'long playing' format, many years before the LP became standard. These performances were nevertheless a cause of bitterness for Schoenberg, for in granting performing and recording rights to Stokowski, Emil Hertzka of Universal Edition had broken his own contract, which reserved to Schoenberg the first performance in America and the first recording of his work.

Boston and New York, with wearisome journeys in between. In December his health took an immediate turn for the worse; in January he became so ill that his first conducting appointment (*Pelleas und Melisande* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra) had to be postponed for two months. The New England climate was, if anything, worse for him than the Berlin one, and he suffered severely from asthma and heart trouble. In these circumstances his ideas for a political party and a newspaper crumbled.

On 6 March 1934, at Princeton University, he gave his first English lecture on the subject of 'Twelve-Tone Music'. In the audience was Albert Einstein, and now if not before Schoenberg made the personal acquaintance of the great physicist, whom he had attempted to meet during the 1920s to exchange ideas on music, science, and the destiny of the Jewish people. Three weeks later Schoenberg and Einstein were together again at Carnegie Hall in New York, to support a concert on behalf of Jewish and Zionist bodies, organized by Leopold Godowsky, to raise money for the resettlement of German Jewish children in Palestine. (A photograph of the occasion shows them standing side by side. It is interesting to note that during Schoenberg's American years it became a common journalistic practice for certain newspapers to refer to him as 'the Einstein of Music'.)

By this time, the beginning of April 1934, Schoenberg had ceased to visit Boston. Malkin decided not to renew his contract and as soon as the existing contract with the Conservatoire expired Schoenberg moved to Chautauqua in western New York State to recuperate. There negotiations began with the large and prestigious Juillard School of Music in New York, who were willing to offer him a post. But Schoenberg doubted his ability to survive another New York winter; in search of a climate that would suit him, he decided to move to the West Coast. In autumn 1934 the family therefore journeyed to Los Angeles—in whose immediate vicinity, apart from trips and short holidays, Schoenberg was to spend the remainder of his life. Even so he was actively considering an invitation from Hanns Eisler to come to Russia and set up a new music institute there; it was only at the end of 1934 that Fritz Stiedry, currently conducting in Leningrad, convinced him that the climate, physical, social, and political, would be seriously unsuitable for him.³

³ It was in this same year that Ivan Ivanovich Sollertinsky, the critic and close friend of Shostakovich who was also artistic advisor to the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, published the first book about Schoenberg to appear in the USSR.

His sixtieth birthday was celebrated by Universal Edition with a *Festschrift* issued that September with tributes from friends and pupils including Oskar Adler, David Joseph Bach, Zemlinsky, Berg, Webern, Stein, Polnauer, and many others. Perhaps more welcome than all of these was the newly-published score of Berg's *Symphonic Pieces* from his new opera-in-progress, *Lulu*. (The *Symphonic Pieces*, premiered in Berlin in November 1934, sparked off a Nazi press campaign against Berg and the conductor Erich Kleiber, who was forced to resign as Music Director of the Berlin State Opera.) Schoenberg responded with a Canon, dedicated to Berg, on motifs from *Lulu*. He was deeply saddened by Berg's unexpected death, from blood-poisoning, on Christmas Eve 1935. The orchestration of *Lulu* remained unfinished; Schoenberg initially volunteered his services to Berg's widow, Helene, but eventually, for complex reasons, decided the job was impossible, and although Berg's opera was staged it was destined to remain in truncated form until Friedrich Cerha's completion of it in the late 1970s.

In California, Schoenberg's circumstances improved. He regained his health, at least for a while, and was able to earn a regular salary. In 1935 he lectured at the University of Southern California while living in Hollywood, where he found private pupils, several of them film composers. In the following year he was appointed Professor at the larger University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Schoenberg was now sixty-two, but UCLA extended its normal retirement age of sixty-five to seventy in his case. He moved with his family into a new house, 116 North Rockingham Avenue in the Los Angeles suburb of Brentwood. Gertrud's mother joined them there in 1937. It would be Schoenberg's home for the rest of his life, the longest he had lived in one place since his childhood. The actress Shirley Temple lived across the street; a few years later, the popular song composer Cole Porter would move in a few doors down.

Schoenberg was thus more fortunate in his experience of exile than many Europeans who fled to America (for example, Bartók). As he declared—not without irony—in a lecture delivered in October 1935, he had been 'driven into Paradise'. He was free: to teach, proselytize, and earn a living. But he was never prosperous, and in a concert environment even more commercially driven than in Europe, he was seldom performed. He was safe from the mounting danger in the Old World, but he felt its shadow nonetheless, threatening the fate of his friends, relatives,

and disciples. He must, too, have felt he had abandoned a battlefield for a backwater: an underlying worry of his American years was that he might slip into total obscurity.

Nevertheless, he gradually acclimatized himself to the new environment—a process which must have been helped by the raising of his thoroughly Americanized young family. He struggled to improve his grasp of the English language, writing and speaking it as much as possible; and in time he made it almost as flexible and vivid (if somewhat idiosyncratic) a medium of self-expression as his German.

It was difficult to adjust to the very different educational situation—above all, the fact that he had now to teach students who lacked even the basic familiarity with classical music which he considered essential:

Although in Europe I was almost unfailingly very dissatisfied, I did usually find that there was at least a certain fairly extensive knowledge of the works of the masters. This indispensable basis for teaching appears to be in the main lacking here. I attribute this to two circumstances: above all to the high price of printed music, which for most students makes it impossible to own the rudimentary little collection of something like 200 volumes that all but the very poorest had in Austria, and secondly to the excessively high price of tickets for concerts and operas, and the social style in which they are got up . . . (Letter 165)

Writing to the composer Ernst Krenek in 1939, Schoenberg made it clear that his sympathies lay with his students as victims of an inadequate educational system:

It's a great pity that the grounding is so bad. Actually I was not very enthusiastic about German teaching either, because [of] the mechanical methods. . . . But American young people's intelligence is certainly remarkable. I am endeavouring to direct this intelligence into the right channels. They are extremely good at getting hold of principles, but then want to apply them too much 'on principle'. And in Art that's wrong . . . musical logic does not answer to 'if—, then—', but enjoys making use of the possibilities excluded by if-then. (Letter 183)

Schoenberg was, in fact, a popular figure with his students at UCLA. He taught all kinds of classes, from elementary counterpoint to advanced musical theory—his teaching based as always on specific examples

provided by the great classical composers. His chief protégés at this period included composers like Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein, who became his assistants in later years, and the young composer and musicologist Dika Newlin, who began studying with him at the age of fourteen. Her teenage diaries provide a vivid picture of the man she called ‘Uncle Arnold’ in all his tempestuous moods and sardonic humours. He also taught John Cage privately, asking no fee ‘as long as he would devote his life to music’. At the other end of the scale he had many students who took music only as a second subject, or even mere ‘musical appreciation’. Far from finding such laymen beneath his dignity as a teacher, he contrived to instill in them the basic skills with which to compose music of their own. He believed this was the best way to encourage appreciation of ‘the fine points of the game’ and an understanding of form and musical development—even if the students never wrote another note of their own in later years. It is a tribute to his teaching prowess that these courses in ‘Eartraining through Composing’ were a complete success; and he went on to write a textbook on the subject, *Models for Beginners in Composition*.

As already mentioned, several movie composers came to Schoenberg during his early days in Los Angeles, hoping to learn some ‘modern’ tricks of the trade: but soon made their exit when he proposed to give them a strict course in counterpoint and harmonization of chorale-tunes. He himself was approached by the MGM producer Irving Thalberg to write the score for the film of Pearl S. Buck’s novel *The Good Earth*. However, negotiations were quickly broken off when Schoenberg stated his terms: 50,000 dollars and the assurance that not a note of his music would be tampered with once he had completed it. The money was not the problem; but the idea that a mere composer could think his score should be sacrosanct was outrageous, unheard-of!⁴

Nevertheless he benefited from the film industry in surreptitious ways. One film composer who stayed the course and studied seriously with Schoenberg was Alfred Newman, who also became an occasional tennis partner. In the winter of 1936–7 Newman persuaded the famous producer Samuel Goldwyn to let him use Stage 7, the principal United Artists sound recording studio, so that the Kolisch Quartet, who were to

⁴Such a guarantee would have been very necessary, considering the routine mutilations performed by professional studio ‘rewrite men’, against whose operations even an experienced theatre composer like Kurt Weill had no defence.

give a series of concerts at UCLA, could make records of Schoenberg's entire acknowledged output of string quartets, including the brand-new Fourth Quartet (the recording actually preceded its public premiere). There were balance problems—in the Second Quartet the soprano Clemence Gifford had to be banished to the far end of the studio because she sang so loudly—but on the whole Schoenberg was very satisfied with the outcome. There was no swift commercial release: a few sets of 78rpm discs were pressed by RCA Victor for Schoenberg's personal use and purchase at cost by friends, but the performances did not appear on LP until 1950. However the new recording medium was beginning to play its part in the wider dissemination of Schoenberg's music. Stokowski's 1932 recording of the *Gurrelieder* has already been referred to. He himself conducted the first recording of *Pierrot Lunaire* in 1942, with Erika Stiedry-Wagner as reciter and a notable accompanying ensemble that included Eduard Steuermann as pianist and Rudolf Kolisch on violin.

A near neighbour in Brentwood was George Gershwin, and a friendship soon sprang up between the composers of *Rhapsody in Blue* and *Pierrot Lunaire*. Both were keen tennis players, and Schoenberg used to take part in matches held once a week on a private court at Gershwin's house. But they also admired each other's music (Gershwin was one of those who purchased the Kolisch Quartet recordings), and shared a common interest in painting: in April 1937 Gershwin made a fine portrait of Schoenberg in oils. Less than three months later he was dead. Schoenberg, whose feelings for the younger composer had been almost fatherly, was deeply affected, and broadcast a radio tribute affirming his belief in Gershwin's greatness as a composer. Later, in lectures and essays, he frequently referred to him in the same breath as Johann Strauss and Offenbach.

His own compositions of the immediate pre-war years were varied in character but unfailing in vitality. The Violin Concerto (1935–6) and String Quartet No. 4 (1936) were highly sophisticated twelve-note works. But he was also aware of the need to provide more 'accessible' repertoire. With the Suite for Strings (1934), written for American high school orchestras, and the setting of the Hebrew *Kol Nidre* (1938) he developed the continuing interest in traditionally tonal music shown in the Cello and String Quartet Concertos. In 1939 he finally completed the Second Chamber Symphony, more than twenty years after he last laid it aside. It is one of the few works to which Schoenberg gave an overtly

tragic ending; and though that may be a last musical reference to the emotional turmoil that followed the work's inception in 1906, it could as easily reflect his mood now that the Second World War had broken out in Europe.

The *Anschluss* in 1938 caused another wave of Jewish refugees to fetch up on American shores. The violinist Louis Krasner talked with Schoenberg at this time and found that family and friends were very much on his mind, and how upset he was at being unable to give any assistance. Those under threat included Schoenberg's daughter Gertrude and her family: they were in considerable danger since her husband Felix Greissle was an active communist. Schoenberg himself was unable to underwrite their emigration, but they eventually managed to leave Vienna with financial aid from the Zemlinskys. Schoenberg was able to give some assistance to the emigration of his friend Moriz Violin, who ended up in San Francisco, and he tried hard to arrange for Oskar Adler to come to California. In a bizarre attempt to make use of Adler's unique combination of talents, he even approached Albert Einstein to canvas the physicist's support for a scheme to invite Adler to set up in Los Angeles as a teacher and lecturer in astrology.⁵ In this Schoenberg was unsuccessful, but Adler was able eventually to make his way to England instead.

In December 1938 Zemlinsky himself arrived in the United States as a refugee. But only a few months later he suffered the first of the series of strokes that would slowly kill him. Hearing he was ill, Schoenberg wrote to him and demanded frequent reports on his health, urging him to come to California for his health. Instead Zemlinsky settled with his wife, Louise, near New York, where Schoenberg eventually visited him for a last revival of their friendship. In 1939, reflecting on his native city, Schoenberg wrote a bitter little poem—a parody of the popular ballad 'Vienna, City of my Dreams'—and set it to the same tune:

Vienna, Vienna, you alone
Should be despised by one and all.
He who can may forgive another,
But we can never absolve you of guilt.

⁵ At Schoenberg's urging, Einstein—no friend to the occult sciences—read Adler's massive *Introduction to Astrology as an Occult Science* (three volumes, 1935–7) and confessed he found it interesting and well-written though 'dangerous for immature people'.

You should be destroyed,
To be survived only by your shame!
You are branded in eternity
For lying and hypocrisy!!!

The Second World War, when it came, was no surprise; but Schoenberg's distress at the course of events was as deep as that of the many other Austrian and German exiles who were gathering in the Los Angeles area. They included Alma Mahler, now married to the novelist Franz Werfel (with whom Schoenberg had unsuccessfully sought to collaborate on a new, more stage-worthy version of *Der biblische Weg*), the novelist and essayist Thomas Mann, and Schoenberg's errant pupil Hanns Eisler, with whom he was now reconciled in renewed friendship. The British composer Arthur Bliss, who taught for a year at Berkeley, visited Schoenberg in the early months of the war to pay his respects:

... I found, besides Mrs Schoenberg, her brother Kolisch also present. Before I had time to assemble my thoughts I was swept into a game of table tennis in their porch with these three; Schoenberg delighted in the exercise, and also had theories about angle shots and other niceties of the game. These theories were not demonstrated practically, for the game was haphazard and delightfully hilarious.

... After lunch Kolisch brought out recordings of Schoenberg's Fourth Quartet, and we listened to this, score in hand. When it finished, Schoenberg, who had remained absolutely still and with no change of expression in his face, said quietly and cryptically, 'It will take some years from now before I can recover the mood in which I wrote *that*'; he then asked for the recording of his First String Quartet. It had hardly begun before he rose, and walked about, obviously deeply affected. Was he recalling Vienna and his early years there, his struggle and difficulties, and contrasting that memory with his present exile? I do not know, but the sight of him with tears in his eyes touched a similar chord in me, and I also felt moved.⁶

Though he assumed American citizenship in April 1941, he continued to feel strongly connected to Europe, and the ongoing spectacle of Germany's corruption and subsequent long, bitterly fought defeat could not fail to arouse his fascinated sorrow, quite apart from the blows he

⁶ Arthur Bliss, *As I Remember* (London, 2nd ed., 1989), pp. 125–6.

received through the loss of relatives and friends. His son Georg remained in Vienna and miraculously escaped transportation to the death camps,⁷ while his cousin Hans Nachod—the first Waldemar—was interned by the British. But Schoenberg's brother Heinrich, who had been an opera singer under Zemlinsky in Prague, was killed by a poison injection in a Nazi hospital; his step-sister Mela was killed by the Nazis in Vienna; and his cousin, Arthur, once head of the firm that supplied electricity to the city of Munich, perished along with his wife in Terezin in 1942. Several of his pupils came to terrible ends: Viktor Ullmann went to the gas chambers in Auschwitz, the Pole Józef Koffler and his family were murdered by the Gestapo, and the gifted Norbert von Hannenheim, who had been diagnosed as schizophrenic even while Schoenberg's pupil in Berlin, ended up in a succession of mental institutions. Meanwhile Zemlinsky, for three years a helpless invalid, died in Larchmont in 1942, never having attained the recognition Schoenberg felt was his due. Just after the war would come the tragic death of Anton Webern, shot by mistake by an American sentry outside his home in Mittersill.

Schoenberg's reaction to events can doubtless be sensed in the upheavals which wrack the *Variations on a Recitative* for organ (1941) and the Piano Concerto (1942). It is overt in the setting of Lord Byron's contemptuous *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte* (1942) which, by implication, is a passionate indictment of Hitler and of tyranny in any age. But it was after the war that he composed his most searing work of protest, *A Survivor from Warsaw* (1947), an affirmation of the indestructibility of the human spirit in the face of Nazi atrocities.

The war increased his personal difficulties. He received no income from his works published in Europe, and found it hard to interest American publishers in his new ones. Although he had friendly relations with Carl Engel, the President of G. Schirmer Inc., Engel died in 1944 and Schoenberg did not feel that his successor, Gustave Schirmer, was in any way as sympathetic to his music. He was adamant that he would 'make no concessions to the market'. This was not simply because of his works' 'uncommercial' difficulty. American participation in the war had opened up an enthusiasm—and therefore a market—for music by

⁷ Schoenberg and his son kept in touch through the medium of Erich Schmid, who being a neutral Swiss was able to correspond with both of them.

American-born composers such as Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Elliott Carter, and a host of lesser names, who found their works being commissioned and performed and broadcast much more widely than hitherto. Many of the European exiles felt themselves being squeezed out on a wave of American cultural nationalism; and indeed there was a chauvinist sentiment abroad in some quarters that American music and musical life had been swamped by waves of European emigrés, and that too many of these—no doubt infected with the decadent traditions that had given birth to fascism—were occupying too many positions of respect and influence. This was exactly the sort of situation to which Schoenberg was hyper-sensitive. As the situation continued after the war he felt himself, and his idealistic aesthetic principles, ever more isolated from the prevailing ‘modern music’ mainstream style of Russo-Franco-American neo-classicism, indebted in varying degrees to Stravinsky, to Hindemith, and Milhaud, all of whom were active in the United States. Schoenberg—who had attacked Stravinsky as long ago as the 1920s, in the *Satires*, as the ‘little Modernsky’—saw neo-classicism as a ready-made style that created an easily acceptable appearance of modernity but affected only the externals of music, with no deeper expressive purpose.

The year 1944 marked a final downturn in his personal fortunes. In February of that year his health deteriorated markedly. His asthma got worse, as did an optical disturbance which had affected him for some years: it prevented him writing music except on specially lined paper with large spaces between the staves. He also experienced bouts of giddiness and fainting, and was found to be suffering from diabetes. He had long toyed with the idea of changing countries yet again (perhaps to New Zealand) but that was now out of the question. Only a few months later, on his seventieth birthday, he was compelled by statute to retire from UCLA. Retiring professors received a pension according to their years of university service; which, in Schoenberg’s case, meant he received an income of thirty-eight dollars a month on which to support himself, his wife, and three young children. He had no desire to quit the post in any case—his inbuilt compulsion to communicate his ideas to young people was as strong as ever, and he knew himself to be, in mind at least, as lively as ever. By contrast, the pittance on which he was pensioned off denied him what should have been the chief advantage of retirement—uninterrupted leisure for creative work. He was forced to take several

private pupils—a much more time-consuming business. In January 1945 he applied to the Guggenheim Foundation for assistance, because ‘I feel my life-task would be fulfilled only fragmentarily if I failed to complete at least those two largest of my musical, and two, perhaps three, of my theoretical works’ (Letter 200). He requested a grant specifically to enable him to finish *Die Jakobsleiter*, *Moses und Aron*, and three important textbooks. It was refused: only one textbook, the short *Structural Functions of Harmony*, was ever completed.

On 2 August 1946, at his home, he suffered a violent heart-attack: a ‘fatal’ one, he afterwards called it in jest, for his heartbeat and pulse ceased, and he was only revived from certain death by an injection made directly into the heart. Although he recovered to some extent, the last years of his life were those of an invalid. Not a musical invalid, however: less than three weeks after his ‘death’ he began composing the String Trio, Op. 45—one of the most expressive and most concentrated of all his works, and one which in some way reflects that grim experience.

No doubt this extreme personal experience also informed his next composition: this too contemplates the courage of the human spirit in the face of death, but in a far wider context. *A Survivor from Warsaw*, for speaker, male chorus, and orchestra, is Schoenberg’s vivid, scarifying but ultimately inspiring reaction to tales of the Nazi Holocaust. The idea of a work celebrating the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto had been suggested by the Russian dancer Corinne Chochem, and the piece was commissioned by the Koussevitsky Music Foundation. Schoenberg believed, however, that Serge Koussevitsky disliked his music; the only work of his that Koussevitsky had performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra was the comparatively anodyne *Theme and Variations*, and in Schoenberg’s view he had done it badly. He therefore bestowed the première of this new and technically very difficult work in his most ‘advanced’ idiom not, as was expected, on Boston but in out-of-the-way Albuquerque, New Mexico, under the baton of Kurt Frederick, a former violist of the Kolisch Quartet, whom he recognized as a dedicated enthusiast for modern music. (When he heard of this Koussevitsky is said to have been ‘pleased’, or perhaps relieved.) Schoenberg’s instinct, as so often, was right. The premiere of *A Survivor from Warsaw*, which finally took place at the University of New Mexico in November 1948, was given by a

largely amateur orchestra and a chorus predominantly made up of farmers from Estancia, sixty miles from Albuquerque. Schoenberg's graphic and passionate work of protest was greeted by a large audience with applause which did not abate until, at the suggestion of the narrator Sherman Smith, Frederick gave an immediate second performance that drew even more tumultuous enthusiasm. For all its complexity of idiom, Schoenberg's music had profoundly stirred its listeners.

This same period saw Schoenberg embroiled in disputes with some of his leading contemporaries, of which the most noteworthy was his clash with Thomas Mann. Schoenberg had encountered Mann frequently since 1943: the novelist had approached him more than once to ask advice on points of detail for his work in progress—the now-famous novel of modern music and the corruption of twentieth-century Germany, *Doktor Faustus*. Mann's chief mentor in musical matters, though, had been Berg's pupil Adorno, of whose views Schoenberg strongly disapproved. However, Schoenberg's relations with Mann had remained cordial, and he had composed for Mann's seventieth birthday one of the most ingenious of his occasional Canons.

But when *Doktor Faustus* was published, Schoenberg was outraged to find that Mann had ascribed to his fictitious composer-hero Adrian Leverkühn the invention of the twelve-note method, under the stimulus of meningeal syphilis and a pact with the Devil. Moreover, Mann gave a partial and externalized account of this 'twelve-tone goulash' (as Schoenberg called it), and used it to air his (and Adorno's) reservations about the nature of contemporary music.⁸ An acrimonious correspondence developed, and the friendship was not resumed until 1950. Quite apart from feeling that Mann had encroached on his 'intellectual property', Schoenberg feared an even wider dissemination of the superficial ideas about his music which he had always fought, and one which by its literary context could be used as a weapon against him. He also feared that his own role in musical development might be forgotten; for most of his time in America he felt isolated and bypassed by the musical world, little performed and little understood in a comparative cultural backwater. In his last years, however, interest in his works began to revive, especially

⁸ To be fair to Mann, Schoenberg did not actually read *Doktor Faustus*, pleading his poor eyesight, but relied on reports of it from his wife and others.

among the younger generation of composers and progressive conductors such as Robert Craft.

On his seventy-fifth birthday, as well as receiving official greetings and felicitations from the Mayor of Los Angeles, his adopted city, he was awarded the Freedom of Vienna, the city of his birth. The latter honour he acknowledged in an ironic acceptance speech to the Austrian Consul-General, at a ceremony that was attended by, among others, Igor Stravinsky: he and Schoenberg had been living within a few miles of each other for the past nine years but had never communicated. Because of his failing eyesight Schoenberg read his speech from a stack of papers, each containing only a few words written in very large letters.

An exile still, his thoughts turned increasingly to the new state of Israel, the Promised Land whose creation he had foreseen in his play *Der Biblische Weg*. Following a pattern already discernible in *Kol Nidre*, *Ode to Napoleon*, and *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Schoenberg's last works (apart from the brilliant *Phantasy* for violin and piano) are vocal, with philosophical or religious texts suggesting a measure of political engagement, concerned with the need to reaffirm the historical and ethical traditions of Judaism and make the new Israel not a narrow nationalist creation but 'an example of the old kind that can make our souls function again as they must if mankind is to evolve any higher' (Letter 257). In 1950 he began writing a collection of 'Modern Psalms' in prose, summing up his religious beliefs. He started to compose a setting of the first Psalm, for speaker, chorus, and orchestra, but left it unfinished. The texts, however, occupied him into his last days.

They were days dogged by illness. The recurrent ill-health of so many years had taken a grim toll. The last photograph taken of Schoenberg before his death is almost shocking: the once round face hollow-cheeked and skull-like, the skin taut and shrunken. He resembles the emaciated, unreal being depicted in his painting 'Red Gaze': physically hardly present any more, except that the eyes are still intensely alive and disturbing. But in the death-mask which Mahler's daughter Anna was to make a few days later, the burning eyes are closed and the face, though that of a very weary man, has a serene repose, even a spirituality, that almost always eluded it in life.

Schoenberg grew progressively weaker in mid-1951. All his life he had been fascinated by number symbolism, and felt a cabalistic dread of the

number thirteen. The 13th, the date on which he had been born, was also his unlucky day of the month (especially if a Friday). Now aged seventy-six ($7 + 6 = 13$), he seemed to fear the approach of Friday, 13 July 1951, with especial anxiety, and for the preceding fortnight was sunk in deep depression. On the day itself he took to his bed; he slept, then woke at night and asked the time. It was 11.45 P.M.: he seemed encouraged that the day would soon be past. Shortly afterwards he murmured 'Harmony, harmony . . .', and, as if slipping back into sleep, he died: thirteen minutes before midnight, leaving an artistic legacy whose real complexities the commentator should not obscure by mere playing with numbers, and whose intense significance continues to fill much of the musical world with profound distrust, and not a little discomfort.



Heart and Brain

*Why were we not given a sense
For the intuition of unspoken laws—
An eye, that then could see?
An ear, that then could hear?*

—('One Wrestling', in *Die Jakobsleiter*)

I think what we need in music today is not so much new methods of music, as men of character. Not talents. Talents are here. What we need are men who will have the courage to express what they think and feel.

—(Schoenberg in interview on NBC Radio, 1933)

He was not a constructor; he was not a mathematician; he was an intelligent man and a terribly curious man but he was the same naïve, creative artist as all of the other composers . . .

—(Eugen Lehner)

On top of being all the other marvellous things he is, the man is a consummate clown and a glorious mountebank.

—(Dika Newlin, to her diary)

HE WAS NEVER CASUAL. HE WAS A BATTLEFIELD. ‘SCHOENBERG’, wrote Alma Mahler, ‘delighted in paradox of the most violent description’. It must have come naturally to him, for a whole series of interlocking paradoxes—historic, spiritual, and artistic—structured his life. He was a Jew, irrevocably committed to the Austro-German cultural tradition at a period when the two became incompatible; his heartfelt reverence towards tradition was in conflict with a freethinking, sceptical, iconoclastic intellect; a passionate man, he struggled to believe himself one whose heart was firmly in the domain of the head; a self-taught, exploratory creative artist, he became a great pedagogue. His difficulties were those of a supremely ‘intuitive’ composer who continually felt he must provide a logical, ‘intellectual’ basis for his achievements; of a man whom one biographer has called the ‘conservative revolutionary’—but should it be the ‘revolutionary conservative’?¹

Such real or apparent contradictions make it impossible to sum him up in a few words. Nor should we try: over-simplification is always a lessening of truth. People are complex. It is nonsense to criticize as inconsistent someone who strives to embrace opposing impulses, or to presume one set of impulses ‘right’ and the other ‘wrong’. Such struggles are the essence of artistic creation—itself a highly paradoxical activity. Naturally, when the opposites are embraced with the passion that was Schoenberg’s most consistent quality, the price of creation may be correspondingly high.

Passion was indeed the keynote of his life, so it is a cruel irony that—because much of his music sounds fairly complex, and because he is generally known to have ‘invented’ a ‘system’ of composition—he should be popularly stigmatized as too ‘intellectual’. Certainly he had a powerful intellect, was unashamed of the fact, and used it to the full. That is not, alas, the implied sense of ‘intellectual’, too often in the last few decades a pejorative term signifying ‘cold, divorced from life, concerned with barren abstraction’ and so on. Nothing could be further from the truth.

¹ Since I penned that perhaps rather flippant word-play in the first edition of this book—it was intended as an inversion of the epithet in the title of Willi Reich’s *Schoenberg oder Dem Konservative Revolutionär* (Vienna, 1968)—this particular aspect of the Schoenbergian paradox has received amplification and reinforcement in a number of important studies. See, for example, J. Peter Burkholder’s ‘Schoenberg the Reactionary’ (a title chosen to resonate with Schoenberg’s great essay ‘Brahms the Progressive’) in Walter Frisch (ed.), *Schoenberg and His World* (Princeton, 1999), pp. 162–91.

This fiery-tempered, hoarse-voiced, chain-smoking, bald-headed little man, this dynamo of nervous energy, felt and thought with extraordinary intensity—and also immediacy. He was nothing if not entirely spontaneous. His pupil Marcel Dick observed that:

Everything came out of himself and on the spur of the moment—the quickest mind I ever met, the most fertile, free and productive mind, including unhesitating contradictions! But as it came to him, it popped out. There was nothing trite. He couldn't repeat himself had he tried. He had to say the opposite.²

Eduard Steuermann's wife, Clara, who herself studied with Schoenberg at UCLA, commented that he:

exerted an enormous influence on anyone who came into his sphere. . . . My entire musical life was different, almost from the first class I had with him. . . . Schoenberg was certainly a very active force. I do not say that it was negative or positive; it was very strong, and, depending on the strength of character of the other person, it affected that other person more or less.³

It has become rather fashionable to stress the absolutist, dictatorial aspects of Schoenberg's character and to speculate, not so much on how much he helped his many famous pupils, as how far he may have damaged them and turned them from their true, 'natural' creative path. There is plenty of evidence that even the most distinguished of his pupils remained in awe of their teacher to the end of their days, and that the major creators among them needed to put a distance between him and them, whether by acts of open revolt (e.g. Hanns Eisler) or simply concealing part of their work and constructive processes from him (Berg and Webern in their different ways). But he also inspired warm loyalty and, indeed, love. The most vivid account of Schoenberg as a teacher—the diaries which Dika Newlin kept while his student in 1939–41, penned hot (and sometimes smarting) from the experience of each day's classes—does much to explain why.

Admittedly, Schoenberg in his sixties, sweating in the Californian sun before classes of American teenagers, teaching in a foreign language, was

² 'Schoenberg's Way', p. 260.

³ Ibid, p. 261.

perhaps less formal and more indulgent than when he had musicians of the calibre of Berg, Webern, Eisler, or Gerhard to tutor in Vienna or Berlin. But not by much, it appears. He demanded high standards and solid work, he pushed his students hard, he was caustic, cutting, and sardonic and he displayed an overweening sense of his own importance. (To an under-striving student: 'Oh! Why you not take advantage of what I teach you? . . . You must realize that I am the greatest teacher in the whole world. I am certainly the greatest in this country and if there's one in Europe to equal me I do not know about it. Why don't you take advantage of this?')⁴ Yet he gave of himself unremittingly and beyond any call of duty, often struggling against serious health problems to come into the University and teach his classes, sometimes to talk and demonstrate and cajole for four solid hours.

Teaching, communicating, helping students to think about music—and sharing with them an inexhaustible fund of knowledge, the thinking of a lifetime, his sheer passionate love of music—seems to have been as necessary to him as breathing. And there was plenty of laughter in his classes. Schoenberg was a natural clown. His stream of jokes and puns good and bad, his epigrams and apothegms, his flights of fancy, were accompanied by a repertoire of facial expressions and body-language which Newlin found impossible to convey but which she assures us was an inevitable part of the Schoenberg experience. Just below the surface was a fund of deep emotion (the end of term often found him tearful as his classes left him). Inextricably blended with the sarcasm, the severity, and the sustained intellectual virtuosity were an immense charm, a child-like simplicity and naïvety, a deep concern for his students' welfare, and perhaps above all a tremendous positivism, a kind of all-encouraging buoyancy. No wonder his classes were unforgettable.

A certain passionate self-confidence and enthusiasm seem to have been Schoenberg's chief character-traits in early life. Coming as he did from an undistinguished social background, this was all to the good, for it allowed nothing to deter him in his pursuit of musical knowledge, even though in the quest he was largely thrown on his own devices. Such text-book learning as he acquired, and the advice of friends such as Oskar Adler and

⁴Dika Newlin, *Schoenberg Remembered. Diaries and Recollections 1938–1976* (New York, 1980), p. 33.

Zemlinsky, could not change the fact that he was, in the truest sense, an autodidact. His consciousness of this achievement, and a conviction that such a process of personal discovery should operate in all aspects of life and intellectual experience, helped shape his fundamental outlook and attitudes. In 1902, Zemlinsky summed him up thus: 'He knows more than I do now, and what he does not know, he feels. He has a brilliant and inquiring mind. And he has the greatest amount of sincerity.'

Quite how far the 'inquiring mind' ranged is not often realized. Schoenberg was not just a composer, teacher, theorist and conductor; he was also at least an original painter, a poet, a considerable artist in prose—even an inventor. The latter activity, if the least important, indicates the fertility of his interest in various aspects of everyday life. His inventions (none of which he ever bothered to patent) included a music typewriter and an instrument for performing eye operations with a magnet. He devised a combination-ticket for use on buses, trams and subways, and a scheme for regulating the flow of traffic in big cities by means of free-ways. He developed a form of chess with one hundred squares instead of sixty-four, and two new pieces (he carved his own set himself, just as he bound his own books); and invented a system of symbols to represent the various moves in tennis, so that a game could be 'taken down' and studied afterwards.⁵ He proposed a new notation for chromatic music which reduced the number of ledger-lines and dispensed with accidentals. As early as the first decade of the century he was interested in the possibilities of radio and pre-recorded sound; anticipated the great advances in films and television; foresaw the development of electronic instruments; and in his play *Der Biblische Weg* (1926–7) already saw the possibility of a man-made holocaust like the atom bomb.

It is sometimes said that Bruckner had found God, while Mahler always sought but never found Him. We might complete the trinity by saying that Schoenberg had to invent God for himself, to have a big enough opponent to wrestle with. His religious life was certainly a difficult one, never finally resolved into a single coherent body of doctrine.

⁵ 'He had to have a theory for everything', various pupils have said: this extended from his analyses of tennis games to psychology. Salka Viertel recalled that in conversation 'Schoenberg was very skeptical about Freud but somehow very interested. But he would invent immediately another method, another science. . . . [C]onversation with him would be fascinating because he would focus on something about which before nobody had thought.'

He claimed never to have lacked religious instincts, and the need to believe in a higher power, beyond but sustaining and justifying human existence, was clearly strong in him. Most of all, we may surmise, in the years when he first broke away from traditional tonal forms and was really working blind, with no one's full understanding. As we have seen, he was raised in the Jewish traditions, but by a free-thinking father, and he came to find the Jewish religion wanting by late adolescence. His conversion to the Lutheran church was partly a means of strengthening his attachment to Western European cultural traditions, and also a means of self-defence in a time of resurgent anti-Semitism; but there were surely many elements in Christian—and especially Protestant—thought and ethical conduct to which his moral idealism would respond strongly.

However, the more necessary religious solace became, the less he was satisfied within the confines of the Church. Organized Christianity finds it difficult to offer a role to the intelligent, critical layman. The religion expressed in *Die Jakobsleiter* is a personal one—the faith of the disillusioned man who, to believe in himself, still needs to pray to an outside source. His long-meditated return to Judaism in 1933 was based on the realization, at least ten years previously, that his racial and religious heritage was inescapable. With the rise of the Nazis it also became a moral imperative, so that he could take up an unmistakable position on the opposing side. But he remained to the end of his day a searcher, both less and more than an orthodox Jew. His final literary work, the *Modern Psalms*, is among other things a critique of various aspects of Judaism.

He was no stranger to more esoteric aspects of belief, such as the Swedenborgian mysticism that gave rise to the spiritual cosmology of *Die Jakobsleiter*. During the opening months of World War I, like a prophet of old, he scanned the sky for portents, keeping a diary of cloud-formations day by day, which he felt would give an indication of how fate was working out for Austria and Germany. Although Schoenberg does not seem to have had the same consuming interest in astrology as his friend Oskar Adler, he apparently accorded it some respect—but he personally was much more prone to numerological superstition. His dread of the number thirteen, his own birth date, has already been mentioned. (The very number under which his birth was registered—8023—adds up to 13.) The thirteenth of the month would be his 'unlucky' day. He especially feared birthdays, such as his sixty-fifth, which were multiples of thirteen.

Just before his sixty-sixth, in 1940, Dika Newlin confided incredulously to her diary:

... Uncle Arnold is scared to death of *Der Tag's* falling on Friday the thirteenth! He has also been indulging in many lugubrious prophecies to the effect that his sixty-fifth year isn't over yet, and that we'll see something terrible happen to him before it is over, all because 65 is a multiple of 13. None of this, incidentally, is supposed to be funny. He really believes these things.⁶

Likewise in sketching a new work it would be on the thirteenth page that things would go wrong, or he would forget to number the thirteenth bar and this would throw his calculations out. (When he did remember, he sometimes called this bar '12A'.) He was not alone in such beliefs; his families were of like mind. Schoenberg's grandson Arnold Greissle-Schoenberg has recalled that in Mödling after the Great War, his mother (Schoenberg's daughter Gertrude) would not go out of the house either on Fridays or on the thirteenth of the month, and breaking a mirror was believed to cause the proverbial seven years of bad luck. (He characterizes his mother as 'otherwise highly intelligent and enlightened'.) In California, Schoenberg's wife shared his fear of the thirteenth day, and Dika Newlin records⁷ that when Schoenberg's last child (originally to be called Arnold Brentwood) arrived in 1941, mother and father were induced to change his name to Lawrence Adam by the advice of an astrologer friend, Charlotte Dieterle (wife of the film director William Dieterle), who told them Arnold was an unlucky name and Brentwood was equally unfortunate because it began with a B. We need to remember that Schoenberg's imagination was always edged round with this mystical world of good and bad fortune, auspicious and inauspicious numbers.

He confessed once that he was almost wholly lacking in political sense. He appears to have come to believe that basic human aspirations were unrealizable by political means, and the wise man should therefore leave the subject severely alone. In his youth he had been sympathetic towards socialism and workers' cultural movements; he had little reason at any

⁶ *Schoenberg Remembered*, p. 247.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 301. The objections sound more numerological than astrological; and Schoenberg apparently gave Lawrence the middle name Adam because it was 'numerologically all right' (*ibid.*).

time to feel much affection for decaying bourgeois society. But any faith he may have harboured in the reformation of this world seems to have been effectively shattered by the Great War, 'the overturning of everything one has believed in', as he put it. As his religious feelings intensified, so did his political scepticism. He was merely irritated by the Marxist ideals of his pupil Hanns Eisler, who in this domain at least was certainly a better theorist than his master. Schoenberg's own view is set forth in the much-quoted letter to Kandinsky of May 1923, already cited on p. 60:

Trotsky and Lenin spilt rivers of blood (which, by the way, no revolution in the history of the world could ever avoid doing!), in order to turn a theory—false, it goes without saying (but which, like those of the philanthropists who brought about previous revolutions, was well meant)—into reality. It is a thing to be cursed and a thing that shall be punished, for he who sets his hand to such things must not make mistakes! But will people be better and happier if now, with the same fanaticism and just such streams of blood, other, though antagonistic theories, which are nevertheless no more right (for they are of course all false, and only our belief endows them, from one instant to the next, with the shimmer of truth that suffices to delude us), are turned into reality? (Letter 64)

Such political opinions as he expressed in later life were hardly progressive, whether on the issue of constitutional monarchy for Germany or an idea for a 'United States of Europe'. But he was not therefore politically unaware. On the contrary, he foresaw the menace of Hitler fully ten years before the Nazis came to power, and recognized the shifts in social structure that were taking place in post-war Germany. His scheme hatched in exile for a 'United Jewish Party' was again politics on a narrow base, this time a nationalistic one. But his writings on collaboration with the Nazis, and on the U.N. Charter of Human Rights, show a broadening outlook. He certainly did not lack a sense of belonging to a broad community of mankind, as he shows in the poems on the mass-instinct and human obligations which he set in the *Six Pieces for Male Chorus* of 1929–30. But a conviction that the individual and the personal ethic can achieve more than the mass is the cornerstone of his political, or rather a-political, thinking. Perhaps his crucial dictum was, 'I believe in the right of the smallest minority.'

These concerns are reflected in the philosophy of *Der Biblische Weg* and also his principal poetic works *Totentanz der Prinzipien*, *Die Jakobsleiter*, and *Moses und Aron*, and the *Modern Psalms*. These texts form perhaps the lesser part of his literary achievement, however. Except in *Moses* the religious and philosophical themes with which Schoenberg deals are seldom given vital expression though language and imagery. Too often they can read like tracts of half-digested Schopenhauer or Swedenborg. Even *Der Biblische Weg*, dramatic though some of it is, comes down frequently to debates—passionate no doubt, but not imaginatively compelling—about more or less esoteric spiritual concepts and their application. As for the other texts, it must be remembered that they were all originally conceived for musical setting: and thus, however absorbing, are artistically incomplete. Perhaps only *Moses und Aron* can stand on its own as a dramatic poem—but since in this case we possess (most of) its music, we can also see that its essential nature demands the music to complete its expressive meaning.

More significant are his prose works. In the published essays, lectures, polemics, pedagogical text-books, and letters—even in his marginalia—Schoenberg's prose style assumes its full, flexible strength. Although a few manuscripts survive from the turn of the century, Schoenberg only began actively writing for publication in 1909, mainly in response to the amount of negative criticism his music was receiving. So writing—like painting—became another means of expression in parallel with his central pursuit of music.

To some extent he modelled his literary idiom on Karl Kraus, who profoundly influenced a whole generation of Viennese writers in his attempts to 'purify' language. Schoenberg's prose is accordingly almost bare of adjectives, terse, apothegmatic, full of word-play and double meanings, eminently suited to quotation and aphorism. The aphorism—epigrammatic, barbed, paradoxical—was perhaps his most congenial form of literary expression, and he wrote aphorisms throughout his life, some of them pithily memorable (e.g. in 1909: 'with the first thought emerges the first error'), some extending to the scope of short essays. Despite understandable awkwardnesses, he carried over many of their salient linguistic qualities when he switched from German to English. For some writings, especially satirical attacks on his critics, Schoenberg even invented for himself an *alter ego*, the musicologist/critic 'Jens Quer' (short for *jenseits Querkopf*, roughly

translatable as ‘much more than an awkward cuss’). About a year before his death he published a selection of the more developed of his essays and lectures under the title *Style and Idea*, a book which has rightly become a classic of twentieth-century writing on music.⁸

The satires and squibs—often left unfinished even if quite elaborately developed—take many different forms. It will perhaps suffice to mention *Pfitzner: three acts of the Revenge of Palestrina*, a spoof opera libretto mocking the ideas of Hans Pfitzner by parodying the action of his most famous work, the opera *Palestrina*. In a hilarious caricature of the opera’s most famous episode (in which Palestrina, visited by the spirits of great musicians of former centuries, is inspired to write his *Missa Papae Marcelli*), Schoenberg’s hapless protagonist, unable to decide what to write, is sardonically encouraged while asleep at his desk by the spirits of ‘the modern masters’ Strauss, Stravinsky, Ravel, Schreker, Bittner, and Pfitzner himself.⁹

By far the most important of his textbooks (a full list is given in Appendix B) is the vast *Harmonielehre* (first published 1911, expanded 1922): not just for a thorough exposition of the accumulated lore of harmonic practice up to about 1910, but also for its countless creative insights into all aspects of music. It reflects his own teaching methods—and not just in its famous opening sentence (‘I have learned this book from my pupils’). He demanded that his students, even in their harmony exercises, think as artists and craftsmen at once; he also taught them the virtue of trial and error, and to discover musical possibilities for themselves as he had before. His role, as he saw it, was to help them cultivate

⁸ A much enlarged edition of *Style and Idea*, incorporating many more such essays and articles (but omitting one or two of those from the first edition), was published in 1975 under the editorship of Leonard Stein; yet even today much of Schoenberg’s literary legacy remains unpublished or uncollected.

⁹ Julius Bittner (1874–1939), the unfamiliar name in this list, was a virtually self-taught Viennese composer (previously a lawyer), whose operas to his own libretti, such as *Das höllische Gold* (1916), were currently enjoying a public and critical vogue. His works have yet to enjoy revival. Schoenberg’s parody is tentatively dated to 1919, two years after the premiere of Pfitzner’s *Palestrina* (in which the modern musicians of the Camerata, whose new style so depresses the Renaissance master, rather transparently symbolize Schoenberg’s school). At the same time Pfitzner had published his critical polemic *Futuristengefahr* (The Danger of Futurism), principally an attack on the ideas of Busoni’s *New Aesthetic of Music*. In 1920 Alban Berg published an article as a rejoinder to Pfitzner, ‘The musical impotence of Hans Pfitzner’s “New Aesthetic”’.

whatever innate musical gifts they had by thinking through their problems logically.

Some find the word 'logic' has a chilling sound when applied to art; but not Schoenberg. Writing to Hauer in 1923 he summed it up concisely: 'behind the term "logical" there is, for me, a complex that says: logic = human thinking = human music = human ideas of nature and law . . .'. He was not, therefore, seeking any kind of barren mathematical perfection, but a mode of human conduct. Most of us will admit, at some time, that the world is not a particularly logical place; but on the whole we try to live our lives as if it is. Perhaps that is all we can do, and certainly in the *Harmonielehre* Schoenberg does not claim to be doing more: '... the teacher must have the courage to be wrong. His task is not to prove infallible, knowing everything and never going wrong, but rather inexhaustible, ever seeking and perhaps sometimes finding. Why desire to be a demigod? Why not, instead, be a whole man?'

Schoenberg planned several major theoretical works after *Harmonielehre*, starting with a matching treatise on counterpoint. As early as 1911 he was proposing to Universal Edition that he would write a book on instrumentation—not, like other orchestration texts, a catalogue of the capabilities of the individual instruments but 'to teach the art of composing for orchestra!' He said he would follow this up with an 'investigation into the Formal Causes of the Effects of Modern Compositions' which would probably be based entirely on the study of works by Mahler; a volume on *Formal Analysis and the Laws Resulting from It* and finally a *Theory of Form*. These various volumes were begun only in 1917 and were soon supplanted by a book on the subject of 'musical coherence' (*Zusammenhang*) which, through various drafts and sketches, became a theoretical treatise on 'The Laws on Musical Composition'.

In the early 1920s, when he began to work out the techniques of his 'method of composition with twelve tones', Schoenberg came to the conclusion that the essence of musical 'coherence' was to be found in the multifarious interrelationships within any piece of music to a single germinal Idea (*Gedanke*). As he once wrote, 'I consider the totality of a piece as the idea: the idea which its creator wanted to present.'¹⁰ Something like a Platonic Idea, this *musikalische Gedanke* was something

¹⁰ 'New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea' in *Style and Idea*, p. 123.

that existed outside the physical world, beyond time and space, or perhaps where time and space were unified. It could only be grasped by intuitive contemplation—as much a spiritual vision as an objective perception of artistic possibilities. It was, so to speak, an occult revelation which could be given physical form by the exercise of compositional craft. From then on, in a series of unfinished essays and larger manuscripts, he pursued the topic of the Musical Idea, its nature, the techniques of its presentation, the ways it could be developed whether in tonal, totally chromatic or twelve-tone works. Although he did briefly consider writing a book on twelve-note technique he later thought it could be adequately dealt with in a mere essay, and limited himself in a few lectures to a very basic and general exposition of the principles involved.

None of these proposed books was actually completed, though much of the manuscript material has now been posthumously edited:¹¹ it marks successive stages in an ever-evolving conception of *meaning* in music. As Severine Neff has written:

... the incompleteness of Schoenberg's theoretical works is inevitable, mirroring his own philosophical and compositional conviction that any theory of art is inherently preliminary. For him it is not possible to understand an artistic accomplishment rationally and completely through any defined system or finite set of laws... For Schoenberg the 'accomplishment', the musical composition, is ultimately the expression of a 'musical idea'—lying beyond time and space essentially metaphysical in nature. Schoenberg accepts that he can never capture in words the true essence of the 'musical idea'. His theoretical remarks constitute instead the intuitions of a composer who is constantly drawing consequences from musical material that he is studying, whether in his own compositions or those of someone else. Thus Schoenberg's aspiration as a theorist is to throw light—necessarily incomplete—on the meaning of *presentation*, the ways in which musical ideas are portrayed in various contexts.¹²

¹¹ See especially *Zusammenhang, Kontrapunkt, Instrumentation, Formenlehre: Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form* ed. Severine Neff, translated by Charlotte M. Cross and Severine Neff (Lincoln and London, 1994) and *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation* ed. and translated by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff (New York, 1995).

¹² 'Schoenberg as Theorist: Three Forms of Presentation', in *Schoenberg and His World*, edited by Walter Frisch (Princeton, 1999), p. 55.

Schoenberg's last technical books, *Models for Beginners in Composition* and the posthumously published *Structural Functions of Harmony* and *Preliminary Exercises in Counterpoint* are, as their titles suggest, not so much speculative and philosophical in nature as practical textbooks for students, at a lower level than *Harmonielehre* and its intended successors. In their concentration on the practical matters in hand, to the virtual exclusion of wider expressive considerations, they represent one extreme of Schoenberg's musicality, his belief in the vital importance of the sheer basic craft of composition.

The other extreme is passionately embodied in this aphorism of 1909:

Art is the cry of distress uttered by those who experience at first hand the fate of mankind. Who are not reconciled to it, but come to grips with it. Who do not apathetically wait upon the motor called 'hidden forces', but hurl themselves in among the moving wheels, to understand how it all works. Who do not turn their eyes away to shield themselves from emotions, but open them wide, so as to tackle what must be tackled. Who do, however, often close their eyes, in order to perceive things incommunicable by the senses, to envision within themselves the process that only seems to be in the world outside. The world revolves within; what bursts out is merely the echo—the work of art!¹³

This credo, of course, applies most strongly to the first totally chromatic compositions of 1908–9; but though in later years Schoenberg might have rephrased it, the idea of art as an exploratory human activity, a way of coping with life, underlies all his work. It is an ethical rather than an aesthetic ideal, though Schoenberg's proud conception of himself as a priest or prophet of art derives from the example of the more extreme Romantic composers (above all Wagner and Mahler). It is not merely a description but a plan of action; a definition of Art as a process with successive stages and an ultimate goal. The human being's distress at finding himself in a corrupt, chaotic and uncaring 'external' world leads to creative introspection—not escapism but being thrown back onto the imaginative and, above all, spiritual resources of one's inner world. By a process of total immersion in this interior realm, a new and implicitly

¹³ Quoted in Willi Reich, *Schoenberg: a critical biography*, translated by Leo Black (London, 1971), pp. 56–7.

higher understanding is reached, until the work of art ‘bursts out’ to confront and instruct the external world in its higher and hard-earned truth. Reinhold Brinkmann has observed a subtle connexion between Schoenberg’s aphorism, with its stress on wide open eyes, and his many self-portraits in which the eyes are the focus of the entire picture, and paintings such as the series of ‘Gazes’ and ‘Visions’. This is, he suggests, ‘Schoenberg’s central pictorial idea: the human being’s existence concentrated in open eyes—eyes of a specific intensity, direct, active, burning, confronting, questioning. . . . These are eyes that are letting the “world” enter—eyes, too, that leave the artist almost defenceless’.¹⁴

There are many testimonies to the ‘burning’ intensity of Schoenberg’s own gaze, of the remarkable quality of his eyes (green eyes, according to some memories), and the way they could make him seem so intimidating in social situations. His Catalan pupil Roberto Gerhard recalled that:

He *was* an intimidating person to meet and on each occasion one literally had to brace oneself up to it. I remember the state of trepidation in which I went down to Mödling for my first interview. I had rung the bell, the door opened, and before I knew what was happening I felt the thrust of a huge dog who had leapt at me and planted its paws on my chest. In the back, just a little shorter than the dog on its hind legs—I could see Schoenberg standing, short, stocky, a bronzed face with dark burning eyes, a Roman emperor’s head. I don’t think I shall ever forget that dog. It was a formidable looking fellow, yet in reality it was an incredibly gentle creature. Somehow I have never been able to dissociate Schoenberg from his dog in that first impression.¹⁵

Gerhard here wittily suggests that Schoenberg shared his dog’s gentleness, as well as its formidable appearance. His uncompromising artistic attitudes—like those of Wagner and Mahler—belong to an ethos that is often deplored in modern times as arrogant. Yet Schoenberg’s un-

¹⁴ ‘Schoenberg the Contemporary’ in *Constructive Dissonance: Arnold Schoenberg and the transformations of Twentieth-Century Culture* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 197–9. We could add that these are the eyes that gaze upon the higher realms of the spiritual world, and there focus upon the divine Idea (*Gedanke*).

¹⁵ ‘Reminiscences of Schoenberg’, in *Gerhard on Music: Selected Writings* ed. Meirion Bowen (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 110–11. The dog in question—Schoenberg almost always had a dog—was presumably the huge Alsatian called Wulli, of whom Max Deutsch remembered ‘he was always careful to bite idiots, but not intelligent people’.

doubted arrogance, which might more accurately be characterized as his absolute self-belief, coexisted with an inner humility. He never felt better for being scorned by a greater number of people. He was an unwilling élitist, as he made clear in a moving lecture delivered in 1937, entitled 'How One Becomes Lonely'. He knew that comparatively few people would understand his music in his own time, and desired none of the isolation and abuse that were the inevitable result. But since an inner compulsion drove him beyond the bounds of the familiar, his artistic conscience would not allow him to renounce the new territory thus gained; it demanded that he consolidate and extend it. He took every opportunity to instruct his audience and encourage gradual appreciation;¹⁶ but he would not compromise the quality or the integrity of his ideas.

There was also a more down-to-earth side to his creativity, an attitude that stems more from Brahms than Wagner. As he once wrote, 'I do not attach so much importance to being a musical bogeyman as to being a natural continuer of properly understood good old tradition!' He certainly felt that he stood in a special relationship to the Austro-German tradition: the whole of that tradition, including Johann Strauss and Léhar. He was not always able to see the merits of those who tried to develop the same tradition in different ways—he was blind, for instance, to the genius of Kurt Weill.

Yet outside the tradition his sympathies were unexpectedly broad—as the list of composers performed at the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen should make clear. Pablo Casals noted with surprise the knowledge and enthusiasm with which Schoenberg could discuss the operas of Donizetti. The members of the Kolisch Quartet were non-plussed when he implored them to add Grieg's String Quartet to their repertoire. Sibelius and Shostakovich he admired, even if he did not particularly like their music, because he sensed and valued in them 'the breath of a symphonist'. His feelings for Shostakovich especially are interesting, since he regarded him as 'a great talent' put in an impossi-

¹⁶ This accounts for the significant number of works which may be considered half-way houses or stepping-stones to his fully-developed style—among them the non-twelve-note members of the Op. 35 male choruses; the German folksong arrangements; the Suite in G for strings; and so on. Even the Suite Op. 29, with its 'folksong variations', and *Von Heute auf Morgen*—a very highly developed twelve-note composition, but one that represents a serious attempt to compose a contemporary light opera of popular appeal—are works in which Schoenberg may be seen consciously reaching out to his audience.

ble position by political forces. When Shostakovich visited the United States in 1949 as part of a Soviet cultural delegation, the New York critic Olin Downes urged Schoenberg to be a signatory to a greetings telegram sent by leading American musicians, expressing the hope that the visit would lead to greater understanding between the two nations. Knowing that his own music, and that of Berg and Webern, was banned in the Soviet Union, Schoenberg felt unable to sign, but sent instead a personal message: 'Disregarding problem of styles and politics I gladly greet a real composer'.

But his insight into the works of the great masters—Bach, Mozart and Brahms especially—was undeniably profound; his writings should be read by all students of these composers. And because he felt that a tradition dies when it ceases to develop, he believed that he had a moral obligation to honour and preserve that tradition—and his own place in it—by continuing to work out the implications he felt to be latent in the work of his predecessors. So he was both prophet and craftsman, an explorer of the unknown backed by the disciplines of a cultural tradition. The first role demanded, above all, faith; for the second he had to exercise his mental gifts to find an intellectual justification.

The two impulses frequently provoked inner conflict. The radical advances represented by *Erwartung* and other works resulted because he staked all on his inspiration. Yet the further he progressed, the more he needed some framework within which to operate, or even to understand his achievements to date. The loneliness and urgency of this need should not be underestimated. It led him, eventually, to develop the twelve-note method. Unable to intuit a natural law for his music, he had, instead, to invent one and then make a leap in the dark—to have faith, not in an abstract principle, but in his ability to control the principle he had originated. We may compare his remark that, if God did not exist, the accumulated faith of generations would eventually summon Him into being.

The struggle scarred his personality. The youthful resilience and high spirits gradually turned to suspicion and over-defensive pugnacity, an almost pathological tendency to look for and expect difficulties and opposition in every situation. He suffered from a kind of persecution-mania, for the good reason that he and his music were persecuted, and he belonged to a race whose very survival was threatened. Since he had to believe himself, he imputed righteousness to his own views and lent them

the unlovely colour of fanaticism. Obsessively aware of his own worth, he was egocentric and often arrogant, overbearing, and dictatorial in manner. Touchy, impatient with misunderstanding, he never attempted to suffer fools gladly, and made many bitter enemies—far more than, in calmer moments, he would have wished. ‘It is very wrong, really,’ he wrote in 1924. ‘For we human beings are far too much in need of tolerance for any thoroughgoing honesty to be helpful to us. If only we could manage to be wise enough to put people on probation instead of condemning them, if only we could give proven friends such extended credit!—I am speaking of my own defects . . .’ (Letter 82).

Partially, then, he acknowledged and regretted his temperament and tried to curb it. But even so he seems hardly to have realized the implications of his oft-repeated dictum that ‘only he can bestow honour who himself has a sense of honour and deserves honour’; how off-putting it was even for people well disposed to him. But at least he was no respecter of persons, was ready to stand up against the leading conductors, performers and administrators of his day, never tried to curry favour with anyone for personal advantage, and exposed his feelings honestly, with devastating bluntness. Since he wore his aggression turned outwards, as a defensive carapace, it was the aspect of him with which most people came into contact, and as much of him as many ever saw. As Roberto Gerhard recalled, ‘Even in repose, the burning eyes in that ascetic face and the faint expression of disdain in the peculiar shape of his mouth had an extraordinary power of intimidation.’ Stories of his graceless egomania are legion, but we must remember that a fair proportion are filtered through the teller’s own hurt pride.

Busoni once said that Schoenberg had the heart of a dragon. We might also recall Nietzsche’s dictum that he who fights with dragons becomes a dragon himself. Whatever fires burned in Schoenberg were stoked by real adversity: he was not always so. There remained a quite different side to his character, seen by his family and friends. Schoenberg could also display enormous charm. The existing recordings of him speaking radiate warmth of personality and wit. On the rare occasions he was captured on film he was usually grinning or laughing. He could be a wonderful host, and was certainly, at least in later years, a loving and expansive *paterfamilias*. Dika Newlin, arriving at Schoenberg’s home for a composition

lesson on 1 December 1939, was presented with an unforgettable picture of Schoenberg *en famille*.

When I went into the house, my ears were assailed by a terrific blast of sound, which turned out to be *Die Meistersinger* (the Metropolitan broadcast). . . . To the accompaniment of the *Dance of the Apprentices* turned on full blast, Ronnie¹⁷ and Nuria were scampering about the floor shrieking and yelling, Nuncie¹⁸ dancing his wife all over the room with the greatest abandon and singing all the choral parts with much gusto, and I don't know what Roddie¹⁹ was doing, but it must have been something! Before I knew what I was doing, I had the score in my hands and was trying desperately to follow it, considerably impeded by Uncle Arnold's gesticulations right under my nose (by this time he'd stopped dancing and was busily pointing out to me all the high points of the orchestration, still singing all the chorus parts in the thickest German).²⁰

Pablo Casals, asked what Schoenberg was like 'as a person', replied: 'Oh, delightful! Very simple, full of charm and possessing a brilliant intelligence'. These qualities are continually glimpsed, alongside his less ingratiating ones, in Schoenberg's voluminous correspondence. The quickness, passion, and spontaneity of his thought and feelings must compel admiration, linked as they were to a ruthless personal honesty and idealism, a strong (if predominantly ironic) sense of humour, unflinching loyalty to his friends and pupils, a real gaiety of spirit even in adversity, and the quality he claimed as his only virtue—the dogged persistence and refusal to give up. The closer one becomes acquainted with his paradoxical personality the more admirable and curiously attractive it seems, in spite of all. And if this is true of the letters, it is even truer of the music, for the paradoxes make the music live.

¹⁷ Schoenberg and Gertrud's second child, Ronald, was born in 1937.

¹⁸ Short for 'Uncle Arnold'.

¹⁹ The Schoenbergs' Irish setter, named after Roderick Dhu in Sir Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*.

²⁰ *Schoenberg Remembered*, p. 147.



CHAPTER SIX



Style . . .

Ah yes, style! To listen to certain learned musicians, one would think all composers did not bring about the representation of their vision, but aimed solely at establishing a style—so that musicologists should have something to do.

—(‘Why No Great American Music?’ 1934)

You cannot expect the Form before the Idea, For they will come into being together.

—(Aaron in *Moses und Aron*, Act II)

WHEN SCHOENBERG WAS ASKED WHY HE NO LONGER COMPOSED music like *Verklärte Nacht*, he used to reply: ‘I still do, but nobody notices.’ On another occasion he commented. ‘My music is not modern, it is merely badly played.’ In 1945 he wrote bluntly to the musicologist René Leibowitz: ‘I do not compose principles, but music.’ Many commentators have yet to receive the message. More than fifty years after its composer’s death, Schoenberg’s music certainly enjoys an enormous reputation (which does not necessarily betoken understanding) in most critical, academic and performing circles. But among the general listening public its stock is considerably lower. Simple enjoyment, even love, are less uncommon than at one time, but still confined

to a minority. Much more widespread attitudes range from bewildered, uncomfortable respect to frank dislike.

This dislike, we may note, is found not only among audiences and critics for whom Schoenberg's works simply seem too 'modern' and dissonant to fulfil their definitions of what constitutes music.¹ It is also displayed both among supporters of a more extreme avant-garde aesthetic, who take Webern rather than Schoenberg as their 'founding father', and among enthusiasts for the 'soft' modernism represented by, for instance, the 'holy minimalism' of John Tavener or Arvo Pärt, the repetitive idioms of Philip Glass and Steve Reich, or the many 'returns to tonality'—or at least to deracinated consonance—of our stylistically miscellaneous times. The critical advocates for these latter trends, especially, have tended to foster the notion that Schoenberg's innovations, and the developments they initiated, however influential, have been a kind of aberration, a *cul-de-sac* out of which music, as melody and harmony and rhythm as previously understood (only now they are *not*, in fact, as previously understood), has fortunately extricated itself.

Here we re-encounter a form of the Schoenbergian paradox. He summed up these attitudes himself in the essay 'How One Becomes Lonely': he was too dry and too sweet, a 'constructor' and a romanticist, an innovator, and yet old-fashioned. His most famous pupils, the more conservative Berg and the more obviously radical Webern, have both won greater acceptance—though from differing audiences, for despite their genius they were smaller, more limited composers. Their separate achievements, and much more besides, were only made possible by Schoenberg's larger one. He was an innovator *and*, in the best sense, a conservative; he spans the distance between his pupils and includes them both. He is less easy to pigeon-hole, so he is easily diminished by a partial or partisan view. But the large view is always the best, and it is by no means impossible.

The main stumbling-block has been that of style and technique, and specifically Schoenberg's 'innovatory' methods. He did not set out to be an innovator: as we shall see, his musical language developed almost

¹ For a vigorous restatement of all the old shibboleths and canards about Schoenberg from a 'traditionalist' viewpoint, see *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music after Modernism* edited by Peter Davison (Brinkworth, 2001).

instinctively as he strove to express, with ever greater precision, the results of a search for truth in personal and artistic experience. Technique was never more than a means to an end; yet technique, being relatively easy to discuss and argue about, became the focus of critical debate. Thus by a bitter irony Schoenberg, the passionate upholder of the 'idea' in music, is associated in most people's minds with a question of style. The world, as usual, has preferred Aaron's craft to Moses' message.

Yet Schoenberg's stylistic development is, after all, vital and integral to his achievement. What follows may help readers with the descriptions of individual works in Chapters 7 to 14. But there is no real substitute for listening—bringing to Schoenberg's works the same quality of attention and response as one brings to any music whatever. From the first, one can discover passages of intense beauty and vitality which will invite further hearing. The music will often demand complete concentration and a quickness of mind to match its own, but with a little familiarity it will begin to establish itself in the listener's imaginative universe. Its tensions and roughnesses will not disappear—they are part of its essence, of its meaning—but their expressive function will gradually become clear. The best part of two centuries, after all, has not rendered the sound of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata or the *Grosse Fuge* exactly ingratiating, and it is mere evasive action to plead that Schoenberg is not a Beethoven. Neither he is; but his sights are set as high. Let us take heart, and recall the wise words of his contemporary Franz Schmidt who said he could not understand a note of *Pierrot Lunaire*, but felt that the composer of *Verklärte Nacht* and the *Gurrelieder* had earned a certain amount of trust.²

Roots

As we have seen, Schoenberg was virtually self-taught: the process of independent discovery shaped his habits of mind, made him highly receptive to new ideas, gave him faith in his own judgment and mistrust of mere codified 'rules' of composition. His earliest musical development was one of 'imitating everything he saw was good' and working on and extending it until he gained mastery. In short, he learned composition from the only fruitful source: the example of previous masters. His

²Schmidt later came to understand *Pierrot* well enough to conduct his own students at the Vienna Conservatoire in a performance in 1929 which Schoenberg declared one of the best he ever heard.

'teachers' in this process, he liked to say, were Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner, and Brahms. Like Brahms, Schoenberg possessed the kind of subtle, speculative mind well able to grasp and draw inspiration from the manifold unorthodoxies of the great classical composers. So, naturally, he built not on the norms of previous tradition but on its most adventurous manifestations. For instance, the gigantic and daring multi-level forms of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, the finales of the *Hammerklavier*, the *Eroica* and the Ninth Symphony, must have had a profound influence on his structural thinking.

Schoenberg's oft-repeated assertion that his musical development was not just the result of an irresistible creative necessity, but the logical next step required by the evolution of musical language, found acceptance only slowly outside his own circle. It may indeed strike some readers as merely another proof of Schoenberg's fabled egoism that he should have hypostatized his personal compositional dilemmas as the historically inevitable crisis of European music. One still hears the view that, if Schoenbergian expressionism has a past, this is only insofar as it represents an extreme end-point of the highly emotional Germanic romanticism of Liszt, Wagner, and Richard Strauss. These composers are certainly recalled in some of Schoenberg's earliest works, such as the *Gurrelieder* and *Pelleas und Melisande*. But that view fails to explain how the essentially *contrapuntal* language of twelve-note music arose out of the essentially *harmonic* one of post-Wagnerian chromaticism: or indeed why the works mentioned already utilize many contrapuntal devices that were to become characteristic of twelve-note usage.

A good answer to this question was given by Alban Berg in 1930 when, provocatively, he took the great music encyclopaedist Hugo Riemann's article on J. S. Bach in his famous 1918 *Musiklexikon*—Bach who 'belongs with equal right to the period of polyphonic music, of the contrapuntal, imitative style that lay behind him, and to the period of harmonic music'—and rewrote it to apply to Schoenberg, who 'belongs with equal right to the period of harmonic style that lay behind him, and of the contrapuntal, imitative style, that sets in again with him'. The idea of an antithesis between harmonic and contrapuntal ways of composing may be more useful than thinking in terms of 'tonality' versus 'atonicity'. But like all such antitheses, it overstates the case. During what Riemann called the 'harmonic' period (from the Classical era to the end of the

nineteenth century), composers did not cease writing counterpoint; and Berg's definition of Schoenberg's special role in musical history might with equal (or even superior) justice be applied to Brahms. It was surely *his* music that initiated the return to 'the contrapuntal, imitative style'—as Schoenberg himself acknowledged in his celebrated 1947 essay with the deliberately controversial title *Brahms the Progressive*. To some extent, of course, that essay was a self-justification: but it is significant that it should have been in Brahms that Schoenberg found what he termed the 'great innovations in musical language' which became central to his own composing style.

Born before Brahms completed his First Symphony, Schoenberg was still a child when Wagner died, while Brahms remained an ever-present public figure around Vienna until his early twenties. The 'new music' of Schoenberg's youth was, above all, the music being produced by Brahms—the leading contemporary practitioner of that art of subtle and long-ranging development of ideas which had flourished since classical times. And just as Brahms had gone back to Bach, and the pre-Baroque composers such as Schütz, to discover and perfect the contrapuntal arts that would enliven and articulate his ripe nineteenth-century harmony, so Schoenberg went back to Bach—and in the first instance probably did so *through* his study of Brahms—in order to take the process forward into the twentieth century. It would be easy to demonstrate that Brahms, who as a conductor introduced many major works of Bach to Vienna for the first time in the 1860s and 1870s, had a more adventurous and wide-ranging appreciation of Bach than Schoenberg did, although at an earlier stage of scholarship. In this respect Brahms was the pioneer. But even in the first decade of the twentieth century, the interest that Schoenberg showed in Bach and, especially, his recognition of Bach's cardinal importance for the development of musical language, was still hardly to be expected in a modern musician of Catholic Vienna. (It may indeed be that Schoenberg's admiration for Bach was one factor that precipitated his conversion to the Lutheran Church.) He conducted performances of Bach motets in 1907, and when *Harmonielehre* appeared in 1911 it was still unusual for a text-book to cite Bach so often for examples of the highest authority. The ceaselessly polyphonic, harmonically roving textures, made up of several simultaneous but motivically intimately related lines, that are so characteristic of Schoenberg's music even from the 1890s, clearly owe

much to Bach. In later years he repaid some of his stylistic debt in his magnificent orchestrations of three works by the Baroque master (see p.268).

In the earliest stages of his career, however, Brahms and Wagner were most important to him. Characteristically, they represented opposing forces which he combined. On the one hand, Wagner, especially in *Tristan* and *Parsifal*, provided the richest possible range of chromatic harmony, one which already strained conventional ideas of tonality; also extreme emotion, relative freedom of form and ways of continually metamorphosing themes for expressive effect. Brahms offered an essentially contrapuntal, classically based art, which stressed coherence between themes and motives, unified wide-ranging structures and expressed, if more austere, an emotional world hardly less intense.

It was probably from Brahms and Wagner that Schoenberg derived two general and interdependent concepts which can be traced throughout his mature output. One is 'the unity of musical space': the idea that the constituent parts of a composition—melody, accompaniment, harmony, rhythm—being expressions of the same idea in different dimensions, should bear an intimate and apprehensible relationship to one another. The whole work should be mirrored in its smallest units, and achieve thereby a new degree of internal unity and consistency.

The other is the principle of 'developing variation'. In classical sonata-form the development section, originally a quick survey of the harmonic horizon and a dash for the home key, had become a vehicle for transforming and combining themes, but—from the first movement of the *Eroica* onward—it assumed prime significance in the structure as a means of exploring the harmonic and melodic universe. Schoenberg took the process to its logical conclusion: though elements of exposition and recapitulation still operate, his movements are all essentially developmental (whether sonata-like throughout or not). One can see this even in as early a work as *Verklärte Nacht*, where a flurry of chromatic figuration may contain the basic shape of a theme, or a union of two themes may give birth to a third.

In fact, thematic development inevitably entails variation, and as a general rule variation takes the place of repetition in Schoenberg's music. In his first broadcast interview in the United States (with William Lundell on NBC Radio on 19 November 1933) he offered three words to explain why his works seemed 'enigmatic' to so many people: '*I never repeat*. I say

an idea only once.’ That remark is at one and the same time an obvious exaggeration, and profoundly true. There is little or no exact repetition in Schoenberg’s mature music, and some works—especially in the high Expressionist period and in his last years—are continuously exploratory and onward-moving, never looking back to their beginnings. After the Expressionist ‘explosion’, by contrast, his concern to reinstate the large forms of classical music, to create once again balanced and patterned large-scale structures, meant that the principle of *recurrence*—the reappearance of familiar elements, clearly identifiable even if embodied in new shapes and contexts—remained vital.

Thus concentrated listening is made the more necessary by the element of perpetual change which Schoenberg brought even to the representation of a basic idea. Moreover, perpetual variation is enshrined in, demanded by, and ultimately the *raison d’être* of, the twelve-note method. Despite this the music, with a few exceptions, remains basically traditional in layout. Themes are recognizable, the proportions of the movements are familiar, the rhythmic pulse is strong and often classical in feeling (too classical, for some tastes). The works have shape, direction, a sense of climax and release, and arguments that are clinched in often very traditional ways—an instance is Schoenberg’s fondness for recalling themes from various sections of a piece at its very end: which, if not in any literal sense ‘repetition’, certainly illustrates the importance that the recurrence of fundamental ideas had for him. These are not negligible points: you cannot separate form and content in music, and structure is itself a part of the expression.

Tonality

The more populist sections of the musical press, in Schoenberg’s day and in ours, have tended to represent him as a predominantly ‘intellectual’ composer writing music according to previously conceived theories and concerned only with abstruse technical issues. Nothing could be further from the truth. Certainly Schoenberg was a highly intelligent and articulate man who thought, wrote, and talked a great deal about what he was doing. Certainly he believed that good compositional technique was absolutely essential—not the techniques of ‘modern’ music, however, but a mastery of traditional musical language as it had evolved from Bach to Brahms. But he was also a highly intuitive creative artist who—more

totally than any stereotypical romantic ‘genius’ in the movies—placed his faith first and foremost in his *inspiration*: the inner vision, the powerful inner necessity without which, he believed, no worthwhile art could be produced. Sometimes the premium he placed on inspiration could be enormously expensive. In his first ‘Expressionist’ compositions he had arrived at a position where he felt himself to be transcribing emotion directly from the unconscious—above all, of course, in *Erwartung*. The fact that the music of *Die glückliche Hand*, though conceived at the same time and similarly ‘Expressionist’ in subject-matter, is far more consciously ‘constructed’, is testimony to Schoenberg’s struggle for balance, his need to rein in the unconscious lest it consume him.

Schoenberg’s inspirational drive also contradicts the clichéd view of him as a ‘constructor’ of music according to ‘systems’—a view that seems to imply a slow and careful worker, weighing his every utterance, scrupulously counting and totalling his tones. In fact, although a few of his compositions were worked out over many years, they were striking exceptions to the norm. By all accounts, including his own, Schoenberg generally composed with extraordinary swiftness and facility. Most of his works (again, there are some significant exceptions) came into being with very little in the way of preliminary sketching. As we have seen, even a score as complex and unprecedented as *Erwartung* emerged fully formed in the space of seventeen days. Schoenberg said he composed three-quarters of the finale of String Quartet No. 2—the first venture into the new region of total chromaticism—in about a day and a half. When he worked on *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten* and on *Pierrot Lunaire*, he sometimes wrote two or three separate numbers in a day. The contrast with such ‘careful’ workers as Berg and, especially, Webern is striking.

He once recalled that when, as a soldier, he dashed off the piano-quintet march *Die Eiserne Brigade* for a party given by his company, his comrades were amazed that he could write music ‘as if he were writing a letter’. He went on:

That this was not a remarkably beautiful piece but only one of average craftsmanship does not make any difference, because it often takes as much time to compose a letter as to write music. I personally belong to those who generally write very fast, whether it is ‘cerebral’ counterpoint or ‘spontaneous’ melody.

Most of the friends of my youth were also fast writers. For instance, Alexander von Zemlinsky . . .³

Schoenberg's son-in-law Felix Greissle confirmed that he 'wrote with comparative ease . . . of all the musicians I have met in my life, [he] had the greatest technique—fantastic technique—only comparable to the great masters'. This aspect of him came to the fore in his work with his composition pupils, whom he liked to teach in groups of four or five. Greissle again:

He sat down and worked before our ears, say, rather than before our eyes. And he talked all the time: 'See, I have done this now. This was not so good', for such and such a reason, 'but I've tried to correct it by doing that or that'. Or, 'I throw the whole thing away and start out new.' He was never ashamed. He was very fast.⁴

Another pupil, Karl Rankl, said Schoenberg was the fastest composer he ever met; once in a class Schoenberg asked a student to give him a theme, saying 'we'll all sit down and write a set of six variations on that theme. And I don't just want a melodic line, I want a whole thing set for strings!' After he got the theme, Schoenberg wrote the entire work in twenty minutes, whereas all his students were still working at their efforts two hours later. Rankl observed of Schoenberg composing: 'for a moment there would be nothing. He would just sit and concentrate. And then he would write and that was it.'⁵

This very immediacy of inspiration, this preternatural swiftness of brain and hand and eye, was surely deeply implicated from the outset of his career in the astonishingly rapid and often unexpected developments of Schoenberg's musical language and conceptions. His sudden advance to mastery in his mid-twenties, from the D major Quartet of 1897 to the *Gurrelieder* (finished in draft in 1901) was as long a stride as many composers achieve in their whole lives. The Quartet is a pleasant, talented work, clearly derivative though not without original touches. In the far more individual *Verklärte Nacht* (1899) the Brahms and Wagner influences are fully assimilated with a sure command of the most advanced

³'Heart and Brain in Music' (*Style and Idea*), p. 55.

⁴'Schoenberg's Way', p. 268–9.

⁵Reported by Rankl's widow in 'Schoenberg's Way', p. 262.

musical language of the day. The *Gurrelieder* then confidently extends this command over a far wider emotional range on the largest possible scale and, especially in Part III, gives a foretaste of the future.

Schoenberg might have stopped there and capitalized on this rapid progress for years. But the creative impetus impelled him onward, to work out the implications of his style; and so began his voyage in search of the unknown. He was not the only explorer. Mahler, Reger and Strauss were all attempting to revitalize the Austro-German musical tradition out of the legacy of Brahms and Wagner; while composers like Busoni, Debussy, and Scriabin were contributing new resources from other traditions. If Schoenberg forged on furthest ahead, that was because he tried to broaden musical experience in many directions at once. His chief compositions of this period, up to 1906, are *Pelleas und Melisande*, the Eight Songs, Op. 6, the First String Quartet, and the First Chamber Symphony.

These works, relatively easy to appreciate now, were thought 'incomprehensible' when first performed. The problems listeners experienced were not (as was popularly supposed) chiefly the result of the dissonant harmony, though Schoenberg certainly took full advantage of post-Wagnerian harmonic strategy in delaying the resolution of cadences until the 'delaying tactics' became more the point of the music than the resolutions so postponed. The difficulties stemmed rather from his wish to endow each work with the maximum substance in the shortest possible time. In *Pelleas und Melisande* the features of a four-movement symphony are fused into a single vast movement; the First Chamber Symphony manages the same feat in half the space. The melodies in these multi-character structures become more and more diverse; they combine in counterpoint, each individual voice asserting its identity to a previously unknown extent. It is to this end that the melodies become so angular, conveying expressive tensions by wide leaps and irregular phrasing. To elucidate the complex textures thus created, Schoenberg aimed, after *Pelleas*, at the maximum clarity of scoring, using each instrument as a soloist, turning away from the plush sonorities of the late-Romantic orchestra and seeking a clearly etched, chamber-musical style. Combination and superimposition of themes made it possible, too, for him to move the musical argument along more swiftly: and (though many insensitive, hard-driven, beat-counting performances do not help matters) the sheer quickness of mind that his scores display remains one of the chief

problems for the unprepared listener. If Schoenberg possesses an actual vice of style, it is precisely that his passionate urge to communicate sometimes swamps his message through the very vigour of delivery. But to have too much enthusiasm rather than too little would seem to be a fault in the right direction.

The compact, ebullient Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, for fifteen instruments, represented his ideal at this period. In addition to the above-mentioned features, it raises hitherto 'inadmissible' harmonic resources to cardinal positions in the structure: for instance the horn-call of ascending fourths (Ex. 5*a*) from which such previously unimaginable cadences as Ex. 5*b* may be constructed; and the whole-tone main theme, Ex. 5*c*. Ex. 5*d* shows a characteristic contrapuntal texture from the main

Ex. 5

Sehr rasch
Horn

The musical score for Ex. 5 is divided into two parts. The top part, labeled 'Sehr rasch' and 'Horn', shows a horn call in bass clef with a forte (ff) dynamic. The bottom part, also labeled 'Sehr rasch', shows a cello passage in bass clef with a forte (ff) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A large 'DropBooks' watermark is visible across the center of the page.

Sehr rasch
Cello

Ex. 5 (continued)

The musical score for Ex. 5 (continued) consists of three staves. The top staff is for Flute, Oboe, English Horn, and Clarinet (Fl., Ob., E.H., Cl.), marked with a 4/4 time signature and dynamic markings of *ff* and *fp*. The middle staff is for Violins (Vlns.), marked with a 4/4 time signature and dynamic markings of *sf* and *mf*. The bottom staff is for Horn, Bassoon, and Contrabass (Hn., Bcl., Fg., Cfg., C.B.), marked with a 4/4 time signature and dynamic markings of *mf* and *ff*. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and a key signature of D minor.

development section. The parts move very freely despite the typical use of canons; the melodic richness is remarkable, but it pulls strongly against the simple key-sense of D minor suggested by the first chord. The passage gains its sense of direction from the strongly defined rhythms of the various strands: but such an inherently unstable fabric needs a master hand to hold it together.

Schoenberg felt that in this work he had attained a settled, mature style—where he would much have preferred to remain. Events proved otherwise. In this connexion it seems appropriate to quote something which Wassily Kandinsky was to write for the 1912 *Festschrift* published in Schoenberg's honour. Although his subject was Schoenberg's paintings, its relevance to his compositional predicament on completing Op. 9 is striking:

The artist thinks that after he has finally 'found his form' he can continue *calmly* to produce further works of art. Unfortunately he himself does not even notice that from this moment (of 'calm') he very soon begins to lose the form he has finally found.⁶

Under the pressure of inner compulsions at whose full nature we can hardly guess, an extreme situation arose which demanded extreme, even traumatic expression. To cope with it Schoenberg had to make a sudden

⁶Kandinsky, 'The Paintings' in *Arnold Schonberg* edited by Karl Linke (Munich, 1912). The entire *Festschrift* is now available in English translation as a section of *Schoenberg and His World* edited by Walter Frisch (Princeton, 1999); I quote from that source, pp. 239–40.

leap in the dark; and so must the listener, coming for the first time upon the radically new kind of music which was the result.

Some have maintained that it is too facile—and therefore likely to be erroneous—to link the events of Mathilde's affair and Gerstl's suicide with the birth of Schoenberg's musical expressionism: that the 'new style' arises logically out of what had gone before, responding in the only way possible to the inner dynamic and accumulating tensions of his previous music. This is, indeed, how he accounted for it in all his writings on the subject. He did not mention his personal circumstances, or how these might have affected his inner life. (His angry rejection of Robert Schaufli's book *The Unknown Brahms*, with its biographical revelations about the master's teenaged encounters with prostitutes in Hamburg, is sufficient indication of how strongly he would have resented any kind of biographical prying.) But it remains a chronological fact that Schoenberg's marriage-crisis immediately precedes the very sudden emergence of the 'expressionist' masterworks. We know he was profoundly emotionally disturbed by it; and since—as he always (and truly) maintained—he was in fact a highly spontaneous, impulsive artist in whom 'heart and brain' shared equally in the creative act, it is reasonable to suppose that his emotional reaction to such catastrophic personal events at very least accelerated this 'logical' development's plunge into previously uncharted musical territory.

Even if the development is totally natural and organic in terms of his previous works, the radically changed *character* of the music cannot be avoided. Hostile criticism has always (wrongly) maintained that 'atonal', totally chromatic music is only suitable for expressing extreme, negative, 'freakish' emotional states: horror, fear, hysteria, mental dissociation and so on. But the predominantly dark and emotionally extreme effect of the first expressionist works is unmistakable, even though this is by no means the sum total of their message. The contrast with Schoenberg's earlier works, predominantly positive and even ebullient although of course containing bleak passages, is very striking. The dark 'Premonitions', the catastrophic 'Peripeteia' of the *Orchestral Pieces*, the bereft protagonist of *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*, the unhappy central figures of *Erwartung* and *Die Glückliche Hand* are all indices of a fundamental change of outlook in their creator, from which emotional stability could only be regained, if at all, with difficulty. Schoenberg's own description of his feeling that he had 'fallen into an ocean of boiling water' which not only scalded his skin

but 'burned also internally' conveys clearly that this was no period of calm, logical evolution but one of inner turmoil and outright pain. There is no impropriety in observing that the music reflects this.

The works in question (virtually there are only ten, Opp. 11, 15–22 and *Die Jakobsleiter*) are often referred to as forming Schoenberg's 'Expressionist' phase, and they do suggest certain parallels with the work of the Austrian and German Expressionist painters, among whom Schoenberg himself must be numbered. The Romantic ideal of conveying urgent subjective emotion directly, without interposing formal conventions, attains here a dark epiphany. The music strives to externalize states of mind, to voice feelings too strange or elemental for words—to be a music of the subconscious. ('... an almost animalistically immediate expression of sensual and psychological emotions. Almost as if everything were transmitted directly,' as he wrote in his Berlin diary apropos *Pierrot Lunaire*.) Music's constituents are tested in the furnace to reveal which of them remain essential. To this end Schoenberg employs harsher dissonance, greater areas of harmonic ambiguity, melodies and phrase-lengths so asymmetrical they approach a kind of 'musical prose'. He also required freedom to introduce more abrupt contrasts and transformations on the one hand, and to concentrate on wholly static elements with unprecedented determination on the other.⁷

Almost inevitably, he came to feel that the procedures and proportions of the traditional tonal forms, dedicated as they are to precisely the kind of humane order whose temporary loss he wanted to convey, afforded him insufficient scope. This was no 'historical mission' to destroy those forms; they were simply, at this stage, irreconcilable with the pressure of his creative needs. He wanted to loosen their framework, to rearrange their elements; and in this context the so-called 'dissolution of tonality' was, for Schoenberg, an unavoidable by-product.

Philosophical Considerations

Here we arrive at the central paradox of Schoenberg's art. While not wishing to simplify matters that were inherently complex, he certainly

⁷ The really 'revolutionary' feature in the finale of the Second Quartet, for instance (which forms a transition to this period), is not primarily harmonic; rather the way in which the structure is made to accommodate disruptive elements such as an immobile, ticking *ostinato* which propels the harmony in no special direction.

did not set out to make his music difficult or obscure. Exactly the opposite. Throughout his career he pursued a goal of *comprehensibility*—seeking to make understandable, in the very working-out of each new composition, all the ramifications and potential of the impulse which gave rise to it in the first place: the Idea. But for Schoenberg, comprehensibility was a matter not merely of clarity but of *relatedness*—every element or event in the work should be fully understandable in relation to everything else. As he once recalled:

In my youth, living in the proximity of Brahms, it was customary that a musician, when he heard a composition for the first time, observed its construction, was able to follow the elaboration and derivation of its themes and its modulations, and could recognize the number of voices in canons and the presence of the theme in a variation. . . . That is what music critics like Hanslick, Kalbeck, Heuberger and Spiedel and amateurs like the renowned physician Billroth were able to do.⁸

By implication, this is also what Schoenberg expected his audience, whether critics or amateurs, to be able to do: follow the working-out of ideas. And he wished to help them by ensuring that the growth of his music should be inevitable and ‘logical’, every moment reflecting in some way its inmost essence.

Schoenberg’s thinking on the nature of musical composition stems from a long tradition of German aesthetic philosophy which likened the work of art to a living organism. Kant, Schopenhauer, Schiller, and especially Goethe had all done much to establish this way of thinking. Goethe’s scientific work, notably in botany and zoology, was more influential in the field of aesthetics than in those sciences themselves. For Goethe, the life of the plant consisted in the formation and transformation of parts within the whole. He saw these individual parts—root, stem, leaf, flower, and so on, as well as their changing shapes and forms through the ongoing process of growth—not as separate elements but as different manifestations of a single continuum that expressed an ‘inner kernel’ which was the plant’s inmost essence.⁹ This idea soon, as it were,

⁸ ‘New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea’ in *Style and Idea* (2nd ed., London, 1975), p. 121.

⁹ This ‘inner kernel’ is clearly analogous to Schoenberg’s ‘Idea’.

took root. Already in the early 1800s A.W. Schlegel held that in the creative arts, all 'genuine forms' are organic, not mechanical. It was at exactly this time that E. T. A. Hoffmann—not only a unique author of fantastic fiction and an originally minded composer of intermittent genius, but also the most penetrating music critic of his era—wrote of 'the profound unity of inner relation in each composition' of Beethoven. Hoffmann observed that 'The inner arrangement of the movements, their development, instrumentation, the manner in which they are ordered, all this works towards a single point: but most of all it is the intimate relationship among the themes which creates this unity . . .'.

Schoenberg was concerned with such issues from very early on, but he was also of the opinion that in the truly 'organic' art-work this inner unity was more than the sum of its parts. In this he approached Goethe's metaphysical notion of the *Urphänomen*, the primordial, archetypal essence of a thing. Schoenberg believed that a musical composition possessed such an essence. From his early years he devoured Kant, Schopenhauer, and Goethe. It seems very likely that many of his teenage discussions with Oskar Adler—who studied Kant and Schopenhauer and while still very young began giving lectures on the borderline between music and philosophy—revolved around their view of the arts and metaphysics and the precise role and nature of music. In one of Schoenberg's earliest surviving essays, from around 1900, he states his conviction that the starting-point for a piece of music is not a motif or a theme, but the urge to embody ideas and beliefs 'which lie beyond the sphere of matter'. Mere imitation of nature is not enough; the task calls for artistic formulation, embodying these impulses in forms that are susceptible to musically creative treatment.

In several of his later essays he likens a musical composition to a living body, which constitutes an organic whole, is centrally controlled, and has limbs and bodily parts which perform different functions while enabling the body as a whole to live. Mostly, he acknowledged, audiences only recognize or appreciate the individual parts, but a full understanding of the work as a whole can only be obtained through understanding the relation of all the parts to each other, as members of a living organism. So what he hoped to achieve in his works was not simply unity, but a *totality of relatedness*.

This same principle seems to underlie Schoenberg's conception, not just of individual pieces of music, but of the entire phenomenon and system of tonality itself. This, too, he thought of as a centrally controlled organic whole. He conceived tonality as working in any given piece through a principle of total relatedness which he eventually came to call 'Monotonicity'. The natural basis of tonality being the fundamental note and the series of overtones above it—giving the octave, fifth, third, and so on, progressively from the simplest to the most abstruse intervals—Schoenberg argued that in any piece of music the tonic (the key in which it begins and ends, supposing it to be a tonal composition) corresponds to the fundamental, and all other tonal areas which the music may traverse relate to that fundamental in a similar manner, and on the same degree of closeness or distance to it, as does the overtone series. So those areas, even if apparently strongly established in their own right, or for a considerable time, only derive their full expressive meaning from their relation to the original tonic, and thus the work must be, in effect, written in only one tonality. He must have formulated this idea quite early in his career, although his most succinct statement of it occurs in his late textbook *Structural Functions of Harmony*:

According to this principle, every digression from the tonic is considered to be still within the tonality, whether directly or indirectly, closely or remotely related. In other words, there is only *one tonality* in a piece, and every segment considered as another tonality is only a region, a harmonic contrast within that tonality.¹⁰

He goes on to illustrate this with charts showing the regions laid out at greater or lesser distance to a central tonic, rather like the planetary satellites of a solar system orbiting their central sun.¹¹ Plenty of writing about twentieth-century repertoire refers loosely to particular works being written in 'expanded tonality', or to composers working in an 'expanded tonal idiom': usually referring to a higher level of dissonance or chromatic inflection than occurs in music written up to the end of the nineteenth century. By contrast, Schoenberg's conception amounts to an

¹⁰ *Structural Functions of Harmony* (rev. ed., 1969), p. 19. Schoenberg's italics.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20. There are separate charts for major and minor.

expanded tonal system: a centrally controlled ‘organic’ continuum of tonal relations which is sufficiently enlarged to embrace any eventuality in terms of movement from region to region, no matter how distant the connexion between those regions.

Clearly, too, this conception is analogous to—perhaps even arose from—his treatment of harmony at the local level in a piece. Just as there was ‘only one tonality’, so there was no duality of consonance and dissonance, only degrees of distance from the fundamental note. Thus one of his most-quoted sayings: ‘dissonances are only the more remote consonances’. And their effects were not to be considered in terms of some spurious opposition of beauty and ugliness: ‘What distinguishes dissonances from consonances is not a greater or lesser degree of beauty, but a greater or lesser degree of *comprehensibility*’.¹² Schoenberg considered that his bringing in these ‘remoter consonances’ as part of a unified harmonic scheme constituted, in a phrase famous throughout the history of twentieth-century music, ‘the emancipation of the dissonance’.

In *Harmonielehre* he refers to the numerous ancient church modes and the way that medieval and renaissance composers were able to produce variety in modal harmony by the alteration of the diatonic tones of a scale. Schoenberg maintains that in the modern version of tonality, centred on only two modes (major and minor), in order to ‘contain the entire harmonic wealth of the church modes . . . it becomes possible thereby to use in a major key all the nondiatonic tones and chords that appeared in the seven church modes’.¹³ Thus any of the five chromatic tones should be able to function as replacements for any of the seven diatonic tones. Much of *Harmonielehre*, in its primary role as a textbook for student composers, is in fact devoted to illustrating the richness of the tonal language that contemporary music had inherited from Bach down to Wagner and Brahms, and demonstrating how that language

¹² ‘Composition with Twelve Tones (I)’ in *Style and Idea*, 2nd ed., p. 216. A corollary of this is Schoenberg’s basic dictum—in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein (London, 1967), p. 16—that ‘coherent harmony reinforces relationship’. Derrick Puffett has demonstrated how Berg applied this precept in the first of his Three Orchestral Pieces: see ‘Berg, Mahler and the Three Orchestral Pieces, Op. 6’ in *Derrick Puffett on Music*, edited by Kathryn Bailey Puffett (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 631–40.

¹³ *Theory of Harmony*, 1978 translation, p. 275.

enables the composer to move from one chord to the next—no matter how apparently remote that next chord may be—in the most direct but logical manner. Naturally, the more remote the connection, the more this involves chromatic alteration of the tones in the chord, or semitonal voice-leading. Schoenberg remarks that chromaticism ‘is always appropriate for making such chord connections smoothly and convincingly . . . more and more, a single scale assumes all [harmonic] functions: the chromatic scale’.¹⁴ (This idea is analogous to Busoni’s pronouncement, in his 1906 *Sketch for a New Aesthetic of Music*, that the twelve tones of the chromatic scale, not the seven-note diatonic scale, should now be considered the basis of tonality.)

Symptomatic—and exemplary—of Schoenberg’s desire to ‘connect remote relations of the tonality into a perfect unity’¹⁵ is his predilection, in his early works, for the so-called Neapolitan relationship between his fundamental key and the tone or tonal area lying a semitone above it (as it might be F in relation to E major, or F sharp in relation to F). Perhaps his liking for such Neapolitan relations arose directly from the importance he attached to the chromatic scale, the scale of semitones. But he must also have been aware of powerful precedents, especially in Brahms, who exploited the Neapolitan relation with superb aesthetic effect in some of his most important works (e.g. the Piano Quintet, Second Cello Sonata and Fourth Symphony). Schoenberg was making use of the Neapolitan relation to define significant tonal areas as early as the first movement of his D major Quartet of 1897. Further examples occur in *Verklärte Nacht*, parts of the *Gurrelieder*, the First String Quartet and some of the songs of the early 1900s, reaching something of a climax in that multi-faceted masterwork, the First Chamber Symphony. Although nominally in E major, this composition begins with a cadence on F,¹⁶ and the E–F duality operates throughout the whole piece with profound structural consequences for its tonal argument—until, in the final bars, the music resolves directly from F major into E. Schoenberg’s use of F as an area

¹⁴ *Theory of Harmony*, 1978 translation, p. 278.

¹⁵ ‘My Evolution’ in *Style and Idea*, 2nd ed., p. 84 (speaking of the First Chamber Symphony).

¹⁶ One might view this as a modern allusion to a famous historical precedent: Beethoven’s beginning his First Symphony, which is in C major, on a dominant seventh of the ‘wrong’—but of course far more closely related—key of F.

that thus prepares the establishment or re-establishment of E means that in this work, F is functioning as a kind of substitute for the dominant. Physically speaking, on the keyboard F lies next to E whereas B, the dominant of E, lies far away. But in terms of harmony and tonal movement the situation is reversed: from B to E is the simplest and nearest of relations (easily expressed in the stable 'consonance' of the bare fifth), from F to E an enormous leap, fraught with all the tension of extreme semitonal 'dissonance'. Even further is the distance between the tonic chord of E major and the minor mode in F (the Neapolitan minor), a most tenuous relation in terms of traditional tonality, which Schoenberg also makes use of in the First Chamber Symphony.

In his charts of the tonal regions in *Structural Functions of Harmony*, Schoenberg shows the Neapolitan regions isolated at the outermost circumference of his 'planetary system' of keys. In the *Harmonielehre* he recommends that the most direct move from the tonic chord to the Neapolitan may be made via the subdominant minor (thus in the case of E and F, via A minor), then comments that, in spite of this mediating harmony,

These two chords [ie the tonic and the Neapolitan] are about as remotely related as chords can be. And if we connect them so directly we are right on that boundary where we can say: *all chords can be connected with one another*.¹⁷

It is worth stressing, yet once more, that Schoenberg was driven by inner inspiration. He wrote music at white-hot speed and thought about what he had done afterwards. But it is in this nexus of ideas—the organic unity of the true work of art, the manifold expression of its inner essence in the interrelation of all its individual parts and features, and the similarly organic and totally interrelated nature of the very medium from which it was created—that he found the justification, indeed the necessity, for his enlargement of tonality in his early works, his subsequent venture into total chromaticism, and finally his development of his 'method of composition with twelve tones related only to one another'. The immediate creative outcome, in 1908–9, was music such as that shown in Ex. 6, over the page.

¹⁷ *Theory of Harmony*, 1978 translation, p. 235. My italics.

Ex. 6

Sehr rasch

Cl. Bsn., BCl. *f*

Celli Tpts. *ff*

Fl., Ob., Cl., etc. *ff*

Vlns., Vlas. pizz. *ff*

6 Horns (stopped) *ff*

Bassi Trbns. (gliss.)

Vlns., Vlas., Tpts. *fff*

4 Trbns. *fff*

Fl., Cl. *p*

Hns. sord. *pp*

etwas ruhiger

Hns. *pp*

etc.

Total Chromaticism

This eloquent illustration of the new style is the opening of the fourth of the Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16, which Schoenberg—some time after composing it—entitled ‘Peripeteia’: Aristotle’s term for the catastrophic reversal or revelation at the climax of a tragedy. Such music is popularly described as ‘atonal’, a term Schoenberg abominated as semantic nonsense, since it implies ‘music written without tones’. After the foregoing discussion, we may better understand his impatience with the term.

Another reason why Schoenberg rejected the concept of 'atonality' must be that it was enthusiastically embraced by Josef Matthias Hauer to describe his own music—but in a highly idiosyncratic fashion. For Hauer, 'atonal' meant music composed according to his personal twelve-note ideas and therefore within the 'melos' (harmonic field) of his tropes (pairs of unordered hexachords). Such music was to be 'monophonic, monodic' and without any conventional rhythmic dimension (which, extremely confusingly, he referred to as the 'tonal' dimension). Many of Hauer's works, in order to induce an uninterrupted contemplation of the nature of their particular 'trope', therefore reduce the rhythmic dimension to nullity. This technique is eloquently embodied in the series of twenty piano pieces which he composed in 1922 and published the next year under the title *Atonale Musik*. With this example before him, one can see why Schoenberg would so vehemently resist the application of the word to his own music.¹⁸

But the damage was done. 'Atonal' became a useful missile of critical abuse, hurled first at Schoenberg and his school and then, increasingly indiscriminately, wherever a critic's ears were outraged by too uncomfortable a degree of dissonance in Bartók, Milhaud, Prokofiev, Britten. . . . So widely was it used that it gradually lost some of its pejorative sting, became enshrined in dictionaries of music, and finally gained acceptance in both popular and scholarly parlance as the word that supposedly describes 'music without a key'. Yet it is still a nonsense-word that completely misrepresents the works to which it is so blithely applied. There remains plenty of key-sense—though often of a limited or localized nature—in Schoenberg's works of this period. Even in Ex. 6, D (major or minor would be too fine a distinction) can be felt as the focus of operations. Moreover, the term 'atonal' makes no distinction between freely chromatic and twelve-note music, whose tonal organization is of a different, subtler, and structurally far-reaching kind.

Speaking about Schoenberg's Op. 11 Piano Pieces in a lecture he gave in 1932, Anton Webern made the simple comment that with this kind of music, 'One's tonal feeling is aroused'. This seems to me the nub of the matter. The wish of our inner ear to find connexions and resolutions is

¹⁸ Hauer also composed two books of *Etudes* for piano in 1922–3, which he dedicated to Schoenberg for the latter's fiftieth birthday.

not ignored by the composer, neither does it wither away. It is simply that the sort of connexions and resolutions offered by traditional canons of tonality are not made available to us, and our 'tonal sense', baulked of easy answers, finds itself forced to make different kinds of connexion and to accept a different range of gestures as indicating resolution or closure. It has to hear the tonal trajectory across wider intervals, less clearly related harmonies; and to pay perhaps greater attention to other aspects—rhythm and instrumental colour, to name two—which may be helping to build form and cohesion.

I prefer to call these first 'atonal' works just 'totally chromatic'—implying simply that most or all of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale occur with extreme frequency and a consequent saturation—but not necessarily immobilization—of harmony. The stylistic progression, therefore, is not from 'tonality' to 'atonicity' (with the veiled implication of 'from sense to nonsense') but, as outlined in the foregoing discussion, from the classical conception of tonality as founded on the seven-note diatonic scale (centred on the major or minor triad) to a more extended view in which the five chromatic notes become equally important. 'Tonality' is not, after all, a compositional preference; it is, for any composer who works within the confines of the tempered scale, the first fact of life. As Schoenberg wrote in the 1921 edition of *Harmonielehre*:

The expression 'tonal' has itself been wrongly used, exclusively instead of inclusively. It can mean only this: everything that results from a series of tones, whether its cohesion is the result of a direct relationship to a single tonic or from links of a more complex kind, forms tonality. . . . A piece of music will always have to be tonal at least insofar as, from one tone to the next, there is bound to be a relationship by which all the tones, successive or simultaneous, produce a progression that can be recognized as such.

This is no prescription for chaos: tonality is here seen as an all-embracing principle capable of different kinds of presentation. Diatonically based tonality, with its powerful clarification of the hierarchy of relationships, is one of them: total chromaticism is another. But the hierarchies do not disappear in the latter—they cannot, and the real composer must work with, not against them. The *sensation* of relationships between tones, of functional differences arising from these relationships, of the tonic, the leading-note, and cadential movement—these are

habitual to all Western listeners, and in no sense theoretical abstractions. What changes is their frame of reference.

The harmonic language of these totally chromatic works, therefore, tends to avoid the most obvious tonal references (sevenths and ninths replace octaves, fourths and tritones are as common as thirds, triads are augmented to span a diminished sixth, anything approaching a perfect cadence is virtually unknown), but continues to exploit the effects of tension and release that give harmony its expressive force and sense of movement, albeit the tension is fiercer and the release more equivocal. This is essentially an extension, not a negation, of the ear's previous musical experience. And behind the ear lies the heart's ability to sense the expressive reality composed into the music, and the brain's resourcefulness in perceiving, with patience and application, the infinite variety of relationships which, on the largest scale, make up each work's 'tonal' integrity.

Schoenberg, intending no permanent break with the past, took care to limit the potential chaos of total chromaticism in every way that could aid his music's comprehensibility. This is most obvious where a background of diatonically-based tonality can still be sensed, as at the opening of the second Op. 16 Orchestral Piece (significantly entitled 'The Past')—anchored to a strongly implied D minor.

Ex. 7

Mässige Viertel

The musical score for Ex. 7 is in 4/4 time and features a 'Mässige Viertel' (moderate quarter) tempo. The key signature is D minor. The score includes staves for Solo Cello, Ob., Tpt., Bsn., Tbn., B.Cl., and Hn. sord. The music is characterized by a strong harmonic center, with a three-note chord implying D minor held continuously by bassoons or trombones for 106 of the 128 bars.

Schoenberg could prolong pedal-points like that in Ex. 7 to create a harmonic centre, or at least a fixed point of reference—as in the first piece of Op. 16, where a three-note chord implying, again, D is held continuously by bassoons or trombones for 106 of the 128 bars. Also themes and motives, after their first appearance, could be restated always

at the same pitch, to aid their recognition despite variation (the first Op. 16 Piece illustrates this tendency also): indeed ‘thematicism’ now became for him the main structural agent.

The very need to keep as many chromatic notes in circulation as possible began to suggest some new but basic harmonic procedures: as Schoenberg tentatively remarked in the *Harmonielehre*, the sequence of chords seemed to be governed by the tendency to introduce in each chord the tones not included in the previous one; conversely, it began to seem ‘out of style’ to repeat too many tones before introducing all twelve. An extract from the Piano Piece Op. 11, No. 2 well illustrates the harmonic consistency of such totally chromatic chord-progressions:

Ex. 8



Far from being ‘without form’ as Schoenberg claimed while working on the Orchestral Pieces, the totally chromatic works have mostly simple, clear-cut basic designs, however complex the details. The patterns of exposition-plus-development, a ternary A-B-A form, or some extension thereof, are the commonest. Moreover, despite the rapidity of events (indeed, because of it) most movements are short and can be grasped as a totality—the longest purely instrumental movement (Op. 11, No. 2) lasts a mere seven minutes. In instrumental music the drive to encapsulate a state of mind in a self-contained musical utterance tended, in fact, to encourage the epigrammatic proportions we find in the *Little Piano Pieces*, Op. 19, and the tiny pieces for chamber orchestra of 1910.¹⁹ The problem was to write *extended* forms which corresponded to the new freedom of musical discourse. Up to a point, in vocal works, the text helped shape the flow of

¹⁹ And which we encounter much more consistently, of course, in the music of Webern.

events. But even in *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten* the forms tended to be simple and brief. The third of the Op. 11 Piano Pieces and the fifth of the Op. 16 Orchestral Pieces, with their open-ended, onward-moving, quasi-improvisatory forms, are both attempts in a new direction, however: Schoenberg, having found how to present states of mind, seems in these pieces to be trying to compose a musical 'stream of consciousness'.

He succeeded in the monodrama *Erwartung*, Op. 17, the last and in every respect the most extreme of the works of 1909. It is the supreme product of his creative *instinct*—for only an explosion from the unconscious could have allowed him to create, in seventeen days, this intensely emotional, highly complex score without developed themes, extensive motivic work, or analysable form, which runs in an unbroken stream of invention, with constant renewal of ideas, for a full half-hour. (Considering that almost all previous music had depended to some extent on structural repetition, those thirty minutes represent a quite gigantic stretch of time.) However difficult the commentator finds it to enter *Erwartung*'s nightmarish emotional world—so daunting is such creativity in the raw—he cannot but be staggered at the fact of its having been created at all. Attempts have been made to rationalize its structure: by tracing the growth of motivic germs or recurring chords; by theorizing about the use of 'sets' of notes with dual melodic and harmonic properties; by graphing the course of the vocal line, and so on. All have failed. No 'explanation' explains more than a haphazard selection of details; none shows why or how the music proceeds from one point to the next, nor why its emotional unity is so powerful. It is instructive, though, to follow each suggested critical approach to the point where it collapses, if only the better to appreciate Schoenberg's truly torrential spontaneity. It is no diminution of his achievement to say, simply, that *Erwartung* is the most astonishing written-out improvisation in the history of music.

By its very nature, however, it was an unrepeatable success. That kind of inspirational frenzy takes hold of an artist at most once or twice in a lifetime. The *conscious* impossibility of developing large-scale forms without constraints remained. The works which followed *Erwartung*, slowly and over several years, show a gradual 'classicizing' tendency, a longing for recognizable structural supports. The symbolist opera *Die glückliche Hand* is more consciously a formed and rounded whole than *Erwartung*, with actual recapitulation of some of the opening music towards the end,

symmetrical arrangement of the action, the tonal areas more clearly stabilized by *ostinato*-patterns and extended pedal-points. Most of the numbers in *Pierrot Lunaire* are still more firmly structured, the internal repetitions within each poem determining the recurrence of musical material in several cases; while the work is an extraordinarily rich compendium of intricate contrapuntal form-building devices which look back to the practices of the Baroque masters, and beyond. 'Nacht' is a particularly tightly organized passacaglia on a three-note motif and its transpositions. 'Der Mondfleck' is a *ne plus ultra* of self-contained polyphonic ingenuity: the instrumental portion consists of a palindrome canon between violin and cello (i.e. they repeat their lines in reverse once they pass the mid-point of the piece);²⁰ a simultaneous palindromic imitation between piccolo and clarinet, not strictly canonic in pitch, but rhythmically exact; and a fugal piano part, the notes of whose principal voices correspond exactly to those in piccolo and clarinet, but with the rhythms augmented to fill twice the space—so that the piano fugue ends just as the other instruments have returned to the start of their canons. Although this pattern-making relates symbolically to the recited text (Pierrot turns round to look at himself from behind) we can hardly be intended to hear such intricacies consciously. They are rather a sign of Schoenberg's obsessive concern to provide his music with a strong, self-sufficient constructive basis.

The search for that basis took another ten years, during which few works saw the light of day. In previous totally chromatic pieces he had worked sporadically with 'sets' of a few notes which always preserved the same mutual relationship whether employed in melody or chords—the passacaglia 'Nacht' is a simple example. *Die glückliche Hand* had a couple of twelve-note chords. In 'Seraphita', one of the richly fascinating Four Orchestral Songs, Op. 22, a quite large form is created by concentration on the melodic development of a few germinal motifs and salient intervals. Moreover, the first fourteen notes of the opening melody for six clarinets contains all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale. Schoenberg's aborted plan for a gigantic Choral Symphony went even further in this respect. Quite extensive sketches for its Scherzo survive and show that movement was to open with an *ostinato* theme consisting of just

²⁰ Commentators habitually refer to this as a 'crab-' or 'mirror-canon'; inexplicably, as these two terms mean different things, and neither applies in the present case.

the twelve chromatic tones, without repetition of any tone. Although the other materials for this movement do not display that characteristic, Schoenberg's development of the *ostinato* and motifs derived from it form the first rudimentary steps towards his later twelve-tone procedures.

Die Jakobsleiter, which grew out of the Symphony, opens with a presentation of all twelve notes—six as a *basso ostinato*, six as a chord building above it.

Ex. 9

Sehr rasch $\text{♩} = 112$

The musical score for Ex. 9 is in 3/2 time, marked 'Sehr rasch' with a tempo of 112 quarter notes per minute. It features a basso ostinato in the cellos and a chordal structure above it. The instruments shown are Cello, Tbn.II, Tbn.I, Tpt.II, Tpt.I, Fl., and Eb Cl. The music consists of a repeating six-note chromatic pattern in the bass and a corresponding six-note chordal structure in the upper staves.

The aim was to fashion all the work's themes out of the notes of the *ostinato*, though not in any fixed order: a procedure close to that of Hauer. Schoenberg extended this technique in the Op. 23 Piano Pieces and the *Serenade*, Op. 24—the notes of the basic figures began to be tied to a fixed order, appearing in a particular series in both melody and harmony, forming 'rows' of varying lengths (anything up to fourteen notes). Thus was born the general principle of 'serialism'; though Schoenberg called his method, soberly enough, 'working with tones of the motif'. We have already noted how motives had gained importance over harmonies in articulating his musical structures. But what if motives, themes and harmonies were to spring from an identical source?

Only gradually did Schoenberg come to accept as logical the direction in which these developments were tending: that the most rational and

fruitful way to harness the disruptive forces of total chromaticism was to give each complete work a 'serial' basis on a single note-row of all twelve chromatic notes.²¹ This he achieved for the first time in the Suite for Piano, Op. 25. Yet logic and inspiration are different things. A compositional method, in the abstract, is valueless; its only justification lies in the specific musical outcome. Schoenberg, of all people, was unlikely to confuse this issue, since he placed an enormous premium on spontaneous inspiration—without it, he said, he was incapable of writing ten bars. But his artistic conscience *demand*ed logic to justify the results; and a belief in the 'logic' of the twelve-note method seems to have been the crucial act of creative irrationality which enabled his inspiration to flow.²²

'Twelve Tones Related Only to One Another'

They say I am mathematically minded because I write in the twelve-note scale; but I do not think twelve is such high mathematics, do you?

—(To his UCLA class, 1 November 1939)

What, then, is the fearsome 'twelve-note method'? In essence, it is a simple device for ensuring complete structural unity in the spheres of melody and harmony. It affirms the unity of musical space and the relationship of all ideas in a work to each other and to their overall context. It starts from the fundamental premise which Schoenberg brought to all his music, in whatever style: namely that one does not create themes, motives, rhythms and harmonies; one composes the *whole piece* of which these features are but the individual details. Some vision of the work as an entity precedes the composition of its tiniest cell. Here I can speak from personal experience, and the experience of every composer with whom I have ever discussed the matter: one scarcely ever begins with a chord or tune, but with an idea of a work that slowly assumes a distinctive size,

²¹ In 1918 Schoenberg started sketching a Septet for strings which seems to use two twelve-note rows. The sketch is substantial enough to show that everything was to be derived from these rows, though generally from segments of them rather than complete rotations of the twelve tones.

²² Or, as Glenn Gould once put it, 'From out of an arbitrary rationale of elementary mathematics and debatable perception came a rare joie de vivre, a blessed enthusiasm for the making of music.' See 'The Piano Music of Arnold Schoenberg' in *The Glenn Gould Reader* (London, 1987), p. 127.

shape, colour, internal motion, and character according to its inborn expressive intention. Like a ship at night or an iceberg through the fog, its bulk looms into the composer's mind. Then, in his head, 'the working-out in breadth, length, height and depth begins. . . . I hear and see the picture as a whole take shape and stand before me as though cast in a single piece, so that all that is left is the work of writing it down'. The words are not Schoenberg's, but Beethoven's;²³ yet Schoenberg's own descriptions are very similar.

Twelve-note music depends on the composer's ability to study 'the picture as a whole', form a precise notion of its necessary melodic and harmonic qualities, and extract from it the binding essence of its ideas, expressed in the form of a succession of the twelve pitches of the chromatic scale. From this series or 'note-row' the realization of the whole work will draw its material. Each pitch should appear once before any of the twelve is repeated. Pitches may be sounded in succession, as a melody; simultaneously, as chords; or different segments of the row may combine as melody and accompaniment. At the precompositional stage the pitches do not relate to a key-note: each is defined by its relationship to the series as a whole. Thus the intervals between them remain constant (except for transposition to different octaves) and the series is impervious to the kind of chromatic alteration that occurs in diatonically based tonality through the changes between major and minor.²⁴ The twelve-note series takes four equally important forms: the original; the original inverted, so that each interval falls instead of rising and *vice versa*; the retrograde (the original series played in reverse); and the retrograde of the inversion. Each form can be transposed to begin on any of the twelve chromatic pitches, so that the original series generates forty-eight variants of itself.

²³ In Thayer's *Life of Beethoven* (London, 1964, edited by Forbes), Vol. II, p. 851.

²⁴ It is also impervious to enharmonic alteration: for example, the notes B-natural and C-flat are presumed to be identical in pitch, and so on throughout the scale—something which, in practice, is really only true of keyboard instruments. Schoenberg admitted, in this regard, that 'the method' could thus be said to be a direct product of the tempered scale; from which it follows that it is fundamentally instrumental, rather than vocal, in origin. This area of ambiguity has never been satisfactorily resolved. But, then, neither is it resolved in the music of the preceding centuries, from Bach onwards; Schoenberg is hardly to be blamed for not providing a solution to a problem which the weight of European musical tradition has, perhaps, made actually insoluble. (And which, to the vast majority of musicians and music-lovers, is not a problem at all.)

In Schoenberg, however, a much smaller number usually suffices for a whole composition. His choice of these particular forms, and the fact that some may occur much more frequently in the composition than others, are matters of the greatest interest, shedding light on the extent to which he regarded the original twelve-note series as fulfilling a similar role to that of the home key in works written in the tonal system as previously understood.

(Although ‘the method’ grew out of Schoenberg’s immediate creative predicament, it could be said to develop certain elements latent in the music of previous times. Something approaching a ‘serial’ use of pitches—though seldom of all twelve—is found intermittently in some works of the Classical masters. Hans Keller adduced a rare instance of such ‘classical serialism’ in the context of all twelve pitches in a work Schoenberg is known to have played as a boy—Mozart’s E flat String Quartet K. 428.²⁵ Schoenberg himself sometimes referred half-jokingly to J. S. Bach as ‘the first twelve-tone composer’, and had analysed Fugue 24 from Book I of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* as a ‘twelve-tone composition’: not so much because the fugue subject contains all twelve tones—with some repetitions—but because throughout the fugue Bach keeps the twelve tones actively in play in a way that aids the delineation and impetus of the individual voices.)

These then are the fundamental rules of twelve-note music; or rather, they *would be* ‘rules’ if such things had any jurisdiction in art. Critics, composers, and listeners who cannot distinguish between an inflexible commandment and a useful guiding principle are liable to come to grief here. I repeat: a method, *in itself*, has no magic properties. That depends on the composer who wields it and what use he makes of it—whether as a pair of crutches or of seven-league boots.

From the beginning Schoenberg allowed some modification of basic principles. Thus notes may be repeated as soon as they are sounded; and two or more may be alternated in trills, *ostinati* and similar formations. At first he avoided creating triadic harmonies or doubling lines in octaves, but later relaxed this practice, commenting that, after all, every note naturally contains its own octave doubling, in the first partial of the overtone series.

²⁵ See ‘Strict Serial Technique in Classical Music’ (*Tempo* 37, Autumn 1955).

We shall encounter further ‘bending’ of the ‘rules’ at every turn as we proceed.

As we have seen, Schoenberg felt that the method enabled him once again to compose ‘as freely and fantastically’ as in his youth. In view of what has already been said about his sheer speed in writing tonal and totally chromatic music, this ‘freedom and fantasy’ were clearly of vital importance to him. And there is plenty of testimony that he composed twelve-note music just as quickly and fluently. *A Survivor from Warsaw*, for instance, was composed in nine days, and some of that time was devoted to perfecting the text. Eugen Lehner told of waiting in Schoenberg’s workroom in California while he was composing a twelve-note piece and being amazed that Schoenberg was writing so swiftly and without any chart or table of the row to help him remember the order of the notes and their transpositions. This phenomenon is accounted for by Felix Greissle, who saw him working on the Wind Quintet from day to day in Berlin:

In the beginning he made a [row] chart for himself. And then, when he started working, he already knew it by heart. . . . [It] went from measure to measure. In the evening, he stopped and it was continued from there next day. He did a little erasing once in a while, when he wrote something down wrong, but very little—only when there was a slip of the pencil. Otherwise, it came out of his mind. When he was on the last movement, he knew the row in all its forms by heart. He didn’t have to write it down again. Webern never knew. Webern always had to write it down.²⁶

A few simple examples are now in order. Ex. 10 shows some passages from a highly developed twelve-note work: Schoenberg’s Violin Concerto. Ex. 10*a* is the main theme of the slow movement—a melody of such refined beauty that the listener need hardly worry that it enunciates a twelve-note row, with liberal relaxations of the ‘rules’ governing note-repetition. From it we can deduce the series which binds the work: Ex. 10*b* sets it out in its original form (starting on A rather than the E of Ex. 10*a*), with its inversion. The actual opening of the Concerto is shown in Ex. 10*c*: here we see the series split up in an intimate dialogue between the soloist and the orchestral cellos. By bringing notes 3 and 5 to the top

²⁶ ‘Schoenberg’s Way’, pp. 261–2.

Ex. 10

Andante Grazioso (♩ = 72)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

(b) Original \longrightarrow \longleftarrow Retrograde

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

Inversion \longrightarrow \longleftarrow Retrograde Inversion

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

Poco Allegro (♩ = 64)
Solo Violin

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

Div. Celli.

(d) Allegro

Row on E

Solo

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 Hn.

Inversion on A

of the cello chords, Schoenberg makes them echo the violin's own phrase. Finally Ex. 10*d* quotes a pawky, dance-like tune from the finale. Again the row is split between soloist and orchestra, and this time two forms are used to make the complete theme, providing two related halves like the antecedent and consequent in a classical melody. The rise and fall of the accompaniment gives the passage a perfectly natural propulsive force.

Ex. 11 shows two more twelve-note melodies. Ex. 11*a*, the main theme of one of Schoenberg's last compositions, the chorus *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, manages to retain a certain hymn-like quality (the words are 'It is thrice a thousand years since I saw you, Temple in Jerusalem, Temple of my grief'). Schoenberg splits the note-row into two halves, and repeats the six notes of each half in reverse order before proceeding to the next. The same thing seems to happen in Ex. 11*b*, a tipsy waltz-tune that emerges in the first movement of the Op. 29 Suite for seven instruments; here Schoenberg employs only six notes, and in the last three bars seems blithely to

Ex. 11

SOP. 1 2 3 4 5 6 (6) 5 4 3 2 1) 7 8 9 10 11 12 (12)

Drei - mal tau - sand Jah - re seit ich dich ge - seh'n Tem - pel in Je - ru - sa - lem

11 10 9 8 7)

Tem - pel mein - er Wehn!

Langsamer (♩ = 132)
(Retrograde on C)

Viola

pp dolce (Inversion on G)

rall. . . .

rearrange their order. But, in fact, he has switched to a different form of the row at a different transposition—one that uses the same six notes and so helps maintain the definitely C-major/minor-ish tonal feeling.

These themes illustrate the practice of dividing the note-row into two complementary six-note segments or ‘hexachords’ for separate treatment. As we see in Ex. 11*b*, Schoenberg was very fond of constructing his row so that the first hexachord, when inverted and transposed by a particular degree, would produce the same pitches (though in a different order) as the *second* hexachord of the original, and make possible new combinations and interrelationships of the twelve tones. A particularly fine case occurs in one of the classics of twelve-note music (and one of Schoenberg’s greatest works), the *Variations for Orchestra*, Op. 31. A mysterious Introduction, a tidal ebb and flow of *ostinato* patterns, very gradually builds up the series, and its inversion a minor third lower, as two parallel currents of steadily accumulating pitches. As shown in Ex. 12*a*, these two forms are complementary in the manner described. The logic of their combination emerges after thirty bars: they attain a defined form with Ex. 12*b*—the basic statement of the romantically lyrical Theme (the original) and its accompanying harmonies (the inversion).

By now it should be obvious that there is nothing in ‘the method’ that relieves the composer of responsibility for every note he or she writes. Rhythm, dynamics, register, texture, part-writing, large-scale form—in fact all *composition* proper—is left, as before, to his own skill and judgment.²⁷ So, it must be stressed, are melody and harmony: these are sim-

Ex. 12

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 12, illustrating the relationship between a twelve-note row and its inversion. The score is written on two staves: a treble staff for the 'Original' and a bass staff for the 'Inversion'. The 'Original' row consists of twelve notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The 'Inversion' row consists of twelve notes: C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2. Dashed lines and arrows indicate the correspondence between the two rows. The 'Original' row is divided into two groups of six notes, and the 'Inversion' row is also divided into two groups of six notes. Arrows show that the first group of six notes in the 'Original' row corresponds to the first group of six notes in the 'Inversion' row, and the second group of six notes in the 'Original' row corresponds to the second group of six notes in the 'Inversion' row.

²⁷ At least as far as Schoenberg is concerned. Certain later composers have attempted, with greater or lesser artistic success, to extend serial principles into the other areas as well.

Ex. 12 (continued)

Molto Moderato (♩ = 88)

Row on B \flat

Celli $\frac{3}{4}$ *p*

Hn. sord.

W. Wind & Bases *p*

Retrograde Inversion

pp

Retrograde

p

Inversion

sehr ruhig

pp

Vln. I muted

pp dolce

Row on C \sharp

pp

ply channeled in certain directions by the use of the series. Moreover, the composer must still provide recognizable themes whose developments will be audible and comprehensible. The note-row will not do this for him, though it does make possible a certain consistency of material at all levels. Schoenberg liked to call this kind of relationship ‘subcutaneous’—that is, more than skin-deep—but in fact it is positively molecular. The note-row is, so to speak, the DNA molecule of twelve-note music: the agent which stamps every bar, every theme, every chord, as belonging to a single, unique work. Almost an abstraction, it exists only at a primordial level, before tonality, before rhythm, before the articulation that makes music possible. But it is produced *via* the work’s basic ideas, and not the other way round. It is the carrier of the *musikalisches Gedanke*. Schoenberg always maintained that his rows presented themselves to him in the form of melodies; and there are several sketches extant which show how he composed, reshaped, and refined the themes of his major works, altering the note-row at every step to follow suit.

Unfortunately, it was on the primacy of the essentially abstract note-row, rather than the conjunction of the composer’s imagination with *the actual sounds* of which his music is composed, that a whole pseudo-scientific tradition of serial analysis came into being from the 1940s to the 1970s and long held sway throughout half the world, particularly in academic institutions. At its simplest it operated by various ingenious means of counting notes; but both in Europe and the United States it soon attained a remarkable degree of sophistication in seeking various forms of quasi-mathematical logic within the operation of the series itself. (To cite two obvious major figures in these theoretical developments—which were preceeded to some extent by the ‘total serialization’ of such post-Webern composers as Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen—Milton Babbitt’s elaboration of set theory and Allen Forte’s establishment in his book *The Structure of Atonal Music* of a vocabulary for the discussion of the operation of subsets in the pre-serial, totally chromatic works, were highly influential.) To this end, the works of Schoenberg and his pupils became laboratory specimens for dissection. Theories of their structural organization, sometimes wildly at variance with the ordinary listener’s experience of the music in performance, were erected with the support of charts, tables and diagrams and sometimes expounded in a jaw-breaking

‘technical’ jargon which successfully obfuscated the author’s discourse to the point of incomprehensibility.

There was nothing necessarily heinous in all this. It might be maintained that such analysis stems from a humble conviction (akin to Wittgenstein’s delineation of the limits of language) that the notes and their internal relationships are the only things in a piece of music that we are equipped to describe: any idea of expressive or personal significance is ‘transcendent’ and therefore beyond the possibility of useful discussion. But to some extent, this whole analytical approach bears responsibility for many dead Schoenberg performances, and much dead post-Schoenbergian music, let alone rejection of Schoenberg on the part of the general willing music lover who would have preferred a little help. Far too much writing on serialism and ‘atonality’, even up to the present day, seems arrogantly to deny the very idea that music could have any reality *except* as a pseudo-mathematical logical construct. The approach is frigid, its ‘objectivity’ false, infinitely far removed from the ‘heart and brain’ which forged those works in the heat of inspiration. For Schoenberg, as we have seen, the point of the technique was to lead us to the transcendent.

The high point of such academic views of Schoenberg’s music was probably the 1970s and 1980s. Since then the range of disciplines brought to bear on him, as on other composers and musical eras, has widened and broadened, taking in an increased span (and better understanding) of cultural factors as well as psychological, post-structural, deconstructionist approaches and so on. Nevertheless it is probably true to say that for most teachers and syllabuses the favoured way to the understanding of Schoenberg’s music continues to rest on note-counting and tracing the operations of the twelve-note row or series; not necessarily to the exclusion of other musical features, but certainly as the most prominent element in the analytical process.

It does not seem far-fetched to suggest that the analysis of Schoenbergian and other serial and totally chromatic works by means of the twelve-note series, or smaller subsets of the total chromatic, created a climate more favourable to the theories and analytical methods of Heinrich Schenker *vis-à-vis* traditionally tonal music, which began to find widespread acceptance from the 1960s onward. Schenker’s efforts had been dedicated to the discovery in each work of the tonal and structural kernel

that he dubbed the *Urlinie* ('fundamental line'). And the *Urlinie* is indeed a series of tones, albeit tones ready freighted with harmonic implications and functions. Schoenberg and Schenker were contemporaries, who emerged from the same Viennese artistic milieu and were subject to most of the same influences. Both believed that a musical composition should be—must be, if it was to be great music—an organic unity. Schoenberg was a composer who taught and theorized; Schenker a teacher and theorist who had occasionally composed. It is a neat irony that among Schoenberg's pieces of hack-work at the turn of the century, he had arranged Schenker's *Styrian Dances*, originally for piano duet, for orchestra.

But in their tastes they were opposites: though a radical thinker, Schenker was a dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist who detested modern composition. It may be that his analytical methods are complementary to Schoenberg's compositional ones, but they stem from a profoundly different view of what a musical work is. For Schenker the essence of a piece, which is expressed in all its dimensions, was an objective, recoverable entity, the *Urlinie*. But for Schoenberg the unique twelve-tone series on which each piece was based was not its essence, but rather a *representation* of that essence. The *Gedanke* itself, the primordial idea, existed beyond the objective world, only accessible by inner vision or intuition. Schenker's methods were essentially prescriptive and reductive. Only the greatest masters were capable of composing the organic unity recoverable in the *Urlinie*; if a piece manifested that unity it was, by definition, a masterpiece. Schoenberg's practice was meant to encourage new possibilities. The series ensured organic unity, but it was at this point—after 'the little bit of juggling I can do with series'—that the composer's innate powers of mastery, his fantasy, his genius such as it might be, his vision, must come into play to create the music. For Schenker the *Urlinie* was the music, in a demonstrable sense; for Schoenberg the series was not the music but merely a precondition for it.²⁸

²⁸ Schoenberg was well aware of Schenker's theoretical work, and his friend Moritz Violin was an early disciple of Schenker. 'Frankly,' Schoenberg wrote to Roger Sessions, specifically mentioning the *Urlinie*, 'I was opposed against most of his conclusions, but on the other hand I have to admit that he has also made some very valuable analyses (of the Beethoven Ninth for example). . . . I don't know if you will believe in these theories more than I do. To me they seem a little exaggerated at least, but I would not say they are untrue. There are things which it might be of advantage to know . . .' Letter, 7 November 1949, in *The Correspondence of Roger Sessions* ed. Andrea Olmstead (Boston, 1992), p. 367.

Notes on paper are not, in themselves, music. Once a composer begins writing, whether he uses the twelve-note method or not, he must descend from the realms of theory and involve himself with physical reality—with sounds that exist as vibrations and have harmonic consequences that will not tamely fit any predetermined scheme. He must compose with, not against, this simple fact. No wonder Schoenberg hated too theoretical an approach to his music. His warnings against it were frequent and pungent. Perhaps his most definitive statement comes in a letter to Rudolf Kolisch of July 1932:

You have rightly worked out the series of my string quartet [No. 3]. . . . You must have gone to a great deal of trouble, and I don't think I'd have had the patience to do it. But do you think one's any better off for knowing it? . . . This isn't where the aesthetic qualities reveal themselves, or, if so, only incidentally. I can't utter too many warnings against overrating these analyses, since after all they only lead to what I have been dead against: seeing how it is *done*; whereas I have always helped people to see: what it *is*! I have repeatedly tried to make Wiesengrund [Adorno] understand this, and also Berg and Webern. But they won't believe me. I can't say it often enough: my works are twelve-note *compositions*, not *twelve-note* compositions. . . . You may wonder at my talking about this at such length. But although I'm not ashamed of a composition's having a healthy constructive basis even when it is a spontaneous result, produced unconsciously, I still don't care to be regarded as a constructor on account of the bit of juggling I can do with series, because that would be doing too little to deserve it. I think more has to be done to deserve such a title, and actually, I think I am capable of fulfilling the considerable demands made on me by those entitled to do so. (Letter 143)

The violist Eugen Lehner, Kolisch's colleague in the Kolisch Quartet, told a story about this same String Quartet No. 3 which may stand as an amusing appendix to the letter just quoted:

Once, we spent a summer with Steuermann and Kolisch, down in the mountains . . . and we analyzed the whole third quartet, bar by bar, note by note and, in those nearly thousand bars, to our great satisfaction, we found two places where Schoenberg had made a grave mistake. So, as soon as we came to Berlin, the first time we went to Schoenberg, we showed it to him.

‘Is that a misprint?’ [we asked]. ‘No, no, that’s correct.’ So we said, ‘Oh, it’s not a misprint, then it’s a mistake.’ Then we explained to him and Schoenberg got mad—red in the face! ‘If I hear an F-sharp, I will write an F-sharp; if I hear an F-natural, I will write an F-natural. Just because of your stupid theory, are you telling me what I should write?’²⁹

(Note: ‘*your* stupid theory’, not his!)

I append some observations by a man who benefited greatly from his creative example, one of the wisest heads and finest composers among his pupils: Roberto Gerhard, in a passage³⁰ whose justice and elegance of expression it would be impertinent to paraphrase.

The ‘method of composition with twelve tones related only to one another’—as Schoenberg called it—is just what it says it is: a method of composition. It cannot, therefore, be too strongly emphasized that it is entirely and exclusively the concern of the composer. It does not concern the listener at all. Above all, the listener must not believe that, if only he knew more about it theoretically, he might find 12-tone music less difficult. This is a hopeless delusion. He will find it easier to listen to only if he hears more of it, often enough. He must, of course, learn how to listen to it, but this will come only from listening itself, and he must remember that it is the *music*, and nothing but the music which matters. It must particularly be stressed that the listener is not supposed to detect the ‘series’ on which a given piece of 12-tone music is based, as if it were Ariadne’s thread: or to follow the ways in which it is woven into the sound-fabric. That, incidentally, can only be discovered by analysis, and though listening and analysis have certainly something in common, they are basically antithetical mental operations.

To insist, however, that the 12-tone technique is no concern of the listener is not to say that he is not affected by it. . . . The fact that the listener may remain unaware of the specific effect it has on him does not in the least detract from the reality of that effect: just as there can be no doubt that an intelligent listener who is yet entirely ignorant of the principle of tonality

²⁹ Schoenberg’s *Way*, p. 263.

³⁰ From his article ‘Tonality in Twelve-Note Music’ (*The Score*, May 1952). Now reprinted in *Gerhard on Music: selected writings* (Aldershot, 2000), p. 121.

may still entirely enjoy, and even form a valid aesthetic judgment of a piece written, say, in C major.

For this is the real issue: the 12-note technique must be understood as a new principle of tonality.

Tonality Enlarged

Like a rondo-theme, the subject has surfaced once more. Tonality is—if the reader will pardon the expression—the key: tonality, at least, in the sense of Schoenberg's large definition quoted on p. 128, with its general connotation of comprehensible harmonic relationships and movement. He denied that he was making any break with previous music. In 1923, when we might expect him to have been fullest of his achievement, he wrote that in twelve-note music 'five tones have been drawn into composition in a way not called for before—that is all, and does not call for any new laws'; he had provided simply a 'more inclusive sound-material' which could be applied to the existing musical forms, but was convinced nothing essential had changed.

Gerhard, in the passage just cited, was speaking in the context of a remark in the 1922 edition of *Harmonielehre* about 'the tonality of a twelve-note series'. Certainly every note-row has its individual properties which profoundly influence the harmonic character of the final work—for instance, one may result in a preponderance of 'dissonant' sevenths and ninths, another in 'consonant' thirds and sixths. But there is another point. The twelve chromatic pitches are only equal in the abstract note-row, which is not so much 'atonal' as *pre*-tonal. Even if a composer was able, in an actual work, to maintain an ideal, undeviating revolution of the twelve at all times in melody and harmony (and as soon as more than one row-form is employed, that becomes virtually impossible)—even then, a tonality-denying 'equality' of pitch would not result. Many other factors are in play: rhythm, register and phrasing, to name but three. Notes on strong beats will take precedence over those on weak ones; low notes will tend to act as roots, high ones as points of climax; the principal tones in melodic phrases will outrank those which are decorative; complex chords will suggest themselves as combinations of simpler harmonies. Ineluctably, hierarchies will be set up. However

momentary, their effect is real, and with familiarity the listener's ear will interpret them in terms of a highly compressed, elusive, yet kaleidoscopic 'tonality' of quickly changing key-centres that embraces the simplest as well as the most complex relationships.

That was clearly what Schoenberg had in mind when he advanced, in contradiction to the term 'atonality', the idea of 'pantonicity'—music which, far from lacking a key, includes all of them. The word never gained currency: perhaps fortunately, for it, too, is somewhat misleading. Just as the twelve notes never achieve their theoretical equality, neither do the key-areas. This is hardly surprising, for like many composers Schoenberg was highly sensitive to the different 'characters' of individual keys. The most obvious proof is his lifelong obsession with D minor, proclaimed in traditionally 'tonal' works both early and late (*Verklärte Nacht*, *Pelleas*, String Quartet No. 1, *Variations on a Recitative*), which also informs freely chromatic works (Five Orchestral Pieces) and twelve-note ones (String Quartet No. 4); more generally in his *oeuvre* it is often revealed by an insistence on the pitch D at climactic or pivotal points.

The 'background' of traditional tonality seems to remain, therefore. Schoenberg provided significant confirmation of this when, for a talk given on Frankfurt Radio in 1931, he made a fresh harmonization of the Theme of the Orchestral Variations (our Ex. 12*b*) in a straightforward *F major*. A recording of this beautiful, faintly *Parsifal*-ish arrangement still exists.³¹ Doubtless a theme can be harmonized in many ways; but to be faithful to its characteristics, all these versions must, presumably, have elements in common. Is the *F major* harmonization the tonal background or archetype which finds individual expression in Ex. 12*b*? The possibility gains force from a study³² which finds that the harmonies of the 'real' version beginning with 12*b* can be analysed as components of two simultaneous keys—one of which is *F*. The other is *B*, harmonically speaking the negative pole to *F* and corresponding to the strong 'Neapolitan' element in Schoenberg's 1931 harmonization. This is not the only instance in Schoenberg of two contending tonal centres a tritone apart: the conflict between *C* and *F sharp* in the Piano Concerto has long

³¹ Part of it was printed in *The Score*, July 1960, with the lecture text.

³² 'Schoenberg's Atonality: Fused Bitonicity?' by Kenneth L. Hicken (*Tempo* 109, June 1974).

been remarked on by certain writers, apparently without any inkling of general significance, and examples can be found elsewhere.

The question is to what extent the fundamental tonal functions continue to operate even in twelve-tone music—and the extent to which Schoenberg expected and intended them to operate. His pronouncements on this topic are inconsistent. Thus in *Structural Functions of Harmony* he seems to deny that they are still at work:

Evaluation of (quasi-) harmonic progressions in [twelve-note] music is obviously a necessity, though more for the teacher than the composer. But as such progressions do not derive from roots, harmony is not under discussion and evaluation of structural functions cannot be considered. They are vertical projections of the basic set, or parts of it, and their combination is justified by its logic.³³

We may start to wonder just how ‘quasi-’ these harmonic progressions may be if we happen across the British composer Edmund Rubbra’s analysis of the final bars of Schoenberg’s (twelve-note) *Phantasy*, Op. 47 as a ‘striking cadence in a clear G minor-major’³⁴ We could also consider a recent analysis by another British composer, David Matthews, of the closing bars of *A Survivor from Warsaw* as establishing a clear (though, as the dramatic context demands, not an ‘unsullied’) C major, the tendency towards which can be sensed throughout the work.³⁵ We might still be inclined to dismiss these readings, as symptomatic of these composers’ own stylistic distance from serial music. Yet Schoenberg himself seems to have thought of his twelve-note music in this fashion, at least part of the time. Writing to Zemlinsky on 7 June 1925, while working on the first movement of the Op. 29 Suite, he referred to the opening bars as if they outlined a conventionally tonal progression of tonic-subdominant-dominant-tonic: ‘four six-note chords, I–IV–V–I’. Certainly if we consider E flat the ‘tonic’ of that work, the bass notes of those chords trace precisely the progression that Schoenberg indicates, although the innate complexity of the six-note chords admits of other interpretations. (Their bass notes apart, the two ‘I’ chords are not even identical.) In fact what these bars

³³ *Structural Functions of Harmony*, p. 194.

³⁴ In his revised edition of Casella’s *The Evolution of Music* (J. & W. Chester, 1964), p.74.

³⁵ Letter to the Editor, *Tempo* 219 (January 2002), pp. 29–30.

Ex. 13

Allegretto ($\text{♩} = 72$) *Sehr flott*

Ensemble

Piano

$^{\text{b}}\text{I}^{\text{b}}$ Row on E flat

$^{\text{b}}\text{IV}^{\text{b}}$ Inversion on A flat

$^{\text{b}}\text{V}^{\text{b}}$ Inversion on B flat

$^{\text{b}}\text{I}^{\text{b}}$ Inversion on E flat

Retrograde on E flat ($^{\text{b}}\text{V} - \text{I}^{\text{b}}$)

'Tonic' Row

seem to show is a principal (E flat) element fused with a subordinate (F sharp) one which also moves through a kind of 'I-IV-V-I' progression, most clearly articulated in the piano. (See Ex. 13.)

Zemlinsky did not accept Schoenberg's 'I-IV-V-I' analysis, and his reply to it was laced with needling irony—but the significant point here is that Schoenberg was prepared to think in such terms, and continued to do so in later works. For instance, he described the form of the third movement of String Quartet No. 4 as 'an A-B-A-B with a modulatory elaboration inserted before the recurrence of the B section'. Modulation, after all, can only occur in relation to keys—or at least, between entities that function in a manner analogous to keys. And Erich Schmid, describing his lessons with Schoenberg in Berlin, recalled that

The extent to which Schoenberg saw himself as rooted in tradition—as did the whole Second Viennese School, most probably—also became obvious in the fact that he somehow heard music in a tonal-harmonic fashion. Even in the case of advanced works that used the twelve-note technique (such as the Third String Quartet), he spoke of tonic and dominant effects.³⁶

³⁶ "...my duty to defend the truth": Erich Schmid in Schoenberg's Berlin Composition Class' by Chris Walton, *Tempo* 218 (October 2001), p. 16.

An early indication of the way in which Schoenberg sought to work with twelve-note formations as if they fulfilled tonal function is found in the Piano Suite, Op. 25. In this, the first work written entirely on a single twelve-note series, he restricts himself to just four forms of the basic note-row: the original row, beginning on E; its inversion; the original transposed by a tritone, to begin on B-flat; and *its* inversion. We might even think of there just being the two basic forms, a tritone apart, plus their inversions. Throughout the work, phrases and harmonies based on the E forms are answered by varied repetitions based on the B-flat forms. This process is extremely clear in the Trio of the Menuett movement. (See Ex. 14.)

Ex. 14

Inversion on B flat

[Moderato ♩ = c. 88]

martellato

sf

Row on E

Inversion on E

Row on B flat

sf

Row on E again

Moreover, in the movements which Schoenberg composed last, the choice of E or B-flat forms is also made to coincide with the larger structural divisions. The opening bars of the Menuett are based on the E forms, but the second section of the movement, after the double bar, begins on the B-flat forms.

His use of these two forms gains added significance in view of Schoenberg's notations on the tables of the rows he wrote out for the Suite, where the original row beginning on E is labelled 'T' (for tonic) and the original transposed to begin on B-flat is labelled 'D' (for dominant). Obviously in traditional tonality the dominant of E is B-natural, not B-flat. But Schoenberg seems to assign the B-flat form of his tone-row the function that would previously have been performed by the dominant in a Classical or Baroque work. Thus, as we have seen, phrases are 'answered' by their 'dominant', and if the first section of a form begins in the 'tonic' row-form, the next section begins on the 'dominant' row-form. This appears to be a development of his wider views on tonality. If there is to be 'one tonality' in a piece—'Monotonicity'—then the most complete expression of that tonality may consist in the relation between the tonic and the area which traditional harmony has seen as its polar opposite—the area whose root is at a tritone's distance from the tonic.³⁷ So it comes about that this degree assumes in Schoenberg's music the importance which was previously accorded to the dominant. If we refer back to Example 1 on page 3—the opening bars of the Second String Quartet—we can see that his 'revolutionary' move from F-sharp minor to C in the space of six bars may be interpreted in the same sense: an initial phrase answered by the 'dominant' which is the tonic's polar opposite.

If Schoenberg thought of the twelve-note method as a development of tonality—and his treatment of the Piano Suite's row-forms certainly suggests he did—then it looks as if he treated the various transpositions of the original forms of the rows in a similar manner to the various degrees of the chromatic scale from the tonic in music composed according to traditional tonality. Thus we could say that the 'tonic' of the Piano Suite is not so much E as the original form of the twelve-note row beginning on E, and that in the 'monotonicity' of the work the forms of the row

³⁷ Interestingly enough, this feature suggests parallels with those principles of 'axis' tonality that have been discovered in the music of Bartók. See Chapter I of *Béla Bartók: an analysis of his music*, by Ernő Lendvai (London, 1971).

beginning on B-flat define its 'dominant region'. As each tone may be the initial tone of a further row-form, so the number of possible relations between each tone and its fellows is increased twelve-fold, in a kind of exponential enlargement of the meaning of tonality.

The Piano Suite is something of a special case, of course: most of Schoenberg's twelve-note works use a very much larger number of the forty-eight possible forms of the original row. But he certainly does not extend the same 'equality' to these different forms that he extends, within the row, to the twelve pitches. In any movement where many different forms are used, some of these may appear only once or twice, while others appear many times. These latter are clearly 'privileged' by their frequency of appearance, and in his fully developed twelve-note music we find that they are further privileged by their occurrence, or the switch from one to another, at important turning-points in the structure. In fact Schoenberg seems often to treat them as if they *were* keys—or the principal regions of a prevailing tonality. In a fascinating analysis, J. Peter Burkholder has shown, for example, that the first movement of the Fourth String Quartet functions as an original adaptation of sonata form not merely in its thematic working and proportions, but also in the analogues of tonality provided by the different row-forms that support this architecture.³⁸

Briefly to summarize only a few salient points of Burkholder's analysis, the exposition—which has three main thematic groups—opens in the original form of the row beginning on D, establishing the 'D minor-ish' feel of the music and the original row on D as the 'tonic' row form. (See Ex. 38a on p. 219) The second thematic group is introduced using the row transposed a fifth up to A, as if in the orthodox dominant of a classical sonata exposition. The third group—which emerges on the row transposed to E, as it were a further fifth up from the second group's A—does not appear until during the development section. (Burkholder suggests the form on E may perhaps be considered 'as an analogue to the sub-dominant in a tonal framework'.) Meanwhile, the development has started to associate the important area of A flat, the tritonal pole from D, with the first main theme, which here appears in inversion. The development concludes with music on the row-form that starts with E-flat,

³⁸ 'Schoenberg the Reactionary' in *Schoenberg and His World*, edited by Walter Frisch (Princeton, 1999), pp.180–6.

precipitating—as if by a perfect cadence—the beginning of the recapitulation, with the opening theme in the ‘wrong’ (or better, polar opposite) row transposed to A-flat. This moves onto the row-form on C-sharp, from whence another ‘perfect cadence’ lands in the form on F-sharp, where the main themes of the second and third groups are recapitulated simultaneously, in counterpoint. When we come to the coda, the first theme reappears in the original row-form on D, creating a sense of a second recapitulation. This last section of the movement, after giving the first theme a final appearance in the ‘Neapolitan region’ (row on E-flat), achieves a concluding cadence into the original row-form on D. Many other row-forms appear in this movement—in fact Schoenberg uses all twelve possible transpositions of the original row—but on the whole the others appear briefly and in subordinate positions, and they tend to be associated with bridge-passages and transitions rather than substantial statements of the movement’s principal materials.

Burkholder’s conclusions are worth quoting verbatim:³⁹

Schoenberg has created with his twelve-tone tools a plastic, living, newly grown form that shows the same organic relationship of form and material as in the music of those for whom the sonata principle was still a method or idea rather than a mold or pattern. Schoenberg’s sonata does not follow a rigid pattern, but approaches the form in exactly the same way as his classical teachers and creates a unique expression of the sonata idea.

To do this, he had to use transpositions of his row complexes as his analogue to tonal motion. . . . Yet Schoenberg chose to transpose his tonal fields in ways exactly analogous to older tonal procedures. . . . Only the urge to create an analogue to tonal form fully explains Schoenberg’s choices.

It was Schoenberg’s desire (whether ‘conservative’ or ‘reactionary’) to emulate older tonal procedures, to return to being a classical (not a

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 185–6. The whole very large question of the relation between Schoenberg’s twelve-note practice and key-based tonality was virtually off-limits for discussion until the 1970s, except for isolated instances such as O. W. Neighbour’s ‘A Talk on Schoenberg for Composer’s Concourse’ (*The Score*, June 1956)—which also deals with the first movement of the Fourth Quartet. In recent years a number of studies have started to explore various aspects of the issue, notably George Perle’s *Twelve Tone Tonality* (Berkeley, 1977, 2nd. ed. 1996), Silvina Milstein’s *Arnold Schoenberg: notes sets forms* (Cambridge, 1990), and Ethan Haimo’s *Schoenberg’s Serial Odyssey* (Oxford, 1990).

‘neo-classical’) composer—whether in the forms and proportions of his movements or in the roles he allotted to his twelve-tone rows—that exasperated the leading figures of the post-war *avant-garde* and caused them to look to Webern, rather than Schoenberg, for new ways to develop serial music. But in the light of his clear desire to assimilate his serial thinking into his broad view of tonality, whether as ‘analogues’ or, perhaps, as enlargements of tonality itself, Schoenberg’s insistence that he was employing a method, not a system, gains added significance. ‘System’ is closed, rigid, rule-bound, routine. ‘Method’ is a *modus operandi*, open-ended, flexible, apt to modification should circumstances demand. And so indeed it proved. It is nonsensical to regard the arrival at the twelve-note method as the consummation of Schoenberg’s creative achievement. His musical style, far from calcifying into a serial sameness, continued to develop for the remaining thirty years of his life. Almost every work shows a new approach, a new way of bending, ignoring, or turning to advantage the supposed ‘rules’ of the method. From the small-scale dance-forms of the Op. 25 Suite he progressed to the vast structure of *Moses und Aron*, from the fragmentation that was part of the Expressionist legacy he arrived at the richer, broader, less extravagant melodic style of the Violin Concerto and Fourth Quartet. Moreover, he felt able to return to tonal composition in the more traditional sense, with a parallel stream of works that explore his beloved First Chamber Symphony style in the light of later experience.

The two streams mingle and enrich each other in a fascinating way—the ‘tonal’ *Kol Nidre* and *Variations on a Recitative* use elements of serial organization while the twelve-note *Ode to Napoleon* and Piano Concerto assimilate features of traditional tonality. In his final phase, with works like the String Trio, *A Survivor from Warsaw*, and *De Profundis*, the serial stream seems to be diverted into darker regions again by an uprush from its Expressionist ancestry, but appearances are deceptive. In one of the most extreme of all Schoenberg’s works, and one which was surely conceived as a musical testament—the String Trio—we encounter music of deep suffering and hysterical intensity, composed with a passionate spontaneity as great as that in *Erwartung*. Yet through the twelve-note technique Schoenberg is able to transmute this harrowing material into its opposite, into music of consolation and radiant tranquillity, such as we see in Ex. 15:

Ex. 15

Moderato ♩ = 104

Violin I

Vla.

Cello

p all 3 con sord.

(cello) *sempre p*

(vla.)

calando

(vla.)

(cello)

—music whose internal organization is strictly serial, yet whose harmonies and onward flow (I hope the listener will agree) are by any definition profoundly and irreproachably ‘tonal’.⁴⁰ It is passages like this which make such distinctions finally irrelevant.

In this chapter I have treated as fully as I dare the technical and stylistic issues raised by the music, so that in the following pages I may speak more

⁴⁰ For the serial organization of precisely this passage see now Silvina Milstein, *Arnold Schoenberg: notes sets forms* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 48–9. She observes that passages of similar character may be found at least as far back as the Second String Quartet. It is as well to point out that the harmonic radiance of late Schoenberg does not beguile all knowledgeable listeners. One distinguished contemporary British composer and teacher is reputed to describe the music of Schoenberg’s later years as ‘pitch deaf’. The present writer is of the opinion that it might be a good thing if such deafness afflicted more musicians.

simply and directly about the nature of the individual works. The last word, which also serves as an ideal introduction to Chapters 7 to 14, may safely be left to Schoenberg himself:

I am somewhat sad that people talk so much of atonality, of twelve-tone systems, of technical methods, when it comes to my music. All music, all human work has a skeleton, a circulatory and nervous system. I wish that my music should be considered as an honest and intelligent person who comes to us saying something he feels deeply and which is of significance to us all.



Choral Music

SCHOENBERG'S OUTPUT DEFIES EASY CATEGORIZATION. THROUGHOUT his career he sought to blend characteristics of various traditional forms into new ones—by adding a singer to a string quartet, combining the functions of orchestra and chamber ensemble, making speech aspire to the condition of song (and vice versa). Under the present heading I place all the music which employs a chorus, apart from the operas, *Die Jakobsleiter*, the *Modern Psalm* and the *Genesis* Prelude. The human voice—whether solo or in chorus, in speech, song or *Sprechstimme*—is vital to a large proportion of Schoenberg's music, and viewed as a whole the choral works form perhaps the most direct means of access to his central preoccupations, in ideas no less than in music.

Certainly there is no better place to begin than the *Gurrelieder*, Schoenberg's supreme contribution to musical late-Romanticism. His previous choral efforts stem, like his earliest songs, from a Brahmsian root—such as the charming little partsong *Ei, du Lutte*, to a text by Brahms's friend Klaus Groth. Even in 1903 Schoenberg started writing a ballad for chorus and orchestra (perhaps inspired by the example of Strauss's *Tailleur*) to a text—*Darthulas Grabgesang*, a translation of a passage from MacPherson's *Ossian*—that Brahms himself had set nearly half a century before. But with the *Gurrelieder* Schoenberg proclaimed himself as a composer of sovereign skill and originality.

Composed in 1901 when he was twenty-six, though not fully scored until ten years later, this gigantic work—part song-cycle, part oratorio,

part melodrama, with strong operatic and symphonic elements—would have been an astonishing achievement at any age. In 1912 he himself stated ‘This work is the key to my entire development as a composer’. *Gurrelieder* lasts nearly two hours and demands an ensemble of five solo singers, speaker, three large men’s choruses (and he *meant* large: several of his performances entailed upward of five hundred male singers), eight-part mixed choir in proportion, plus an orchestra that includes eight flutes, five oboes, seven clarinets, ten horns, a quartet of Wagner Tubas, seven trumpets, seven trombones, four harps, and much percussion, including heavy iron chains. In its ambition and expressive orientation the work owed an immense amount to Wagner, and Schoenberg employed his own leitmotivic technique, accumulating motif after evocative motif, each one an additional thread woven into the lustrous tapestry of a score that teems with a plethora of detail.

The twenty-five-year-old Schoenberg was already a prolific writer of songs and had composed his first chamber-music masterpiece, the sextet *Verklärte Nacht*. He had copious experience scoring the works of other composers, but had completed nothing of his own for large (or even standard) orchestra. So in its very enormity—and the sovereign confidence and imagination with which he handles his forces—*Gurrelieder* was an astonishing feat. The gigantic ensemble is deployed to tell the legend of the twelfth-century King Waldemar of Denmark and his love for the beautiful maiden Tovelille, whom he establishes in his favourite castle of Gurre, on a lake near Elsinore. The name *Gurre*, incidentally, has nothing to do with war—supposedly it represents the sounds made by the doves that throng the castle, and there are doveish associations in the story, both in Tove’s name and the vatic Wood-dove who narrates her death. For Waldemar’s jealous queen, Helwig, discovers the affair and has Tove murdered. In his grief, Waldemar curses God—for which, after his own death, he and his followers are condemned to rise from their graves and ride abroad every night.

So far, so Romantic. Schoenberg’s choice of Jacobsen’s text was inspired, for it has all the paraphernalia beloved of the Romantic era—a doomed love-affair, defiance of heaven, ghostly warriors, a wild hunt, the imagery of starlight, forests, graveyards, lonely strands and castles by the sea. But the score testifies to something not always associated with Schoenberg: a passionate love of nature, caught and reflected again and

again in orchestral metaphor of marvellous precision and warmth. We know the Hymn to the Sun was inspired by an actual sunrise which Schoenberg saw from the Anninger Mountain near Vienna, with friends from the choral society he conducted. *Gurrelieder* would not be the masterpiece it is if it was merely huge: it is continuously evocative, gorgeously-hued, sumptuously melodic, deeply felt and profoundly humane. For though the music owes much to Wagner, and especially *Tristan und Isolde*, this is at no point a morbid exercise in romantic escapism. On the contrary it is a kind of 'anti-*Tristan*'. Waldemar and Tove are indeed cast in the Wagnerian mould, willing to renounce the world for their love, whose very intensity embodies a death-wish. But the world survives their deaths and Waldemar's spectral bravado; these dreams of ancient heroics fade into dreams indeed; life goes on. The *Gurrelieder* opens with a wonderfully delicate prelude evoking a sunset—an image which is often used to characterize the whole late-Romantic period; but it ends with a jubilant *sunrise*, on a note of hope and confidence in the future of life (and music). This is very far from the ambiguous 'love-death' of *Tristan*, and equally far from the conventional idea of 'decadent' late-Romanticism.

Gurrelieder is already a mature work, and no one but Schoenberg could have written it. A cycle of poems might seem a convenient set of pegs on which to hang a large-scale musical canvas, but the music shows a high degree of internal logic from the outset. In the very first bars of the 'sunset' prelude, swaying, fluttering arpeggios on woodwind, harp and strings describe a triad of E-flat with an added sixth. Then harmony becomes melody in a way characteristic of Schoenberg at all stages of his development: a calm, broad trumpet phrase turns the chord into a motif (Ex. 16a). It is not perhaps a vital structural point, but apt and prophetic, that when at the other end of the work the chorus greets the rising sun, the sun comes up (Ex. 16b) in C major on four trumpets, with the original descending motif *inverted* into a rising one:

Ex. 16

(a) **Mässig bewegt**
 W. Wind Harps, etc. Solo Tpt.
 Ob.
p hervortretend

(b) **Mässige** (aber breit)
 W. Wind etc.
 Tpts.
ff hervortretend

After the prelude, the love of Waldemar (tenor) and Tove (soprano) is presented lyrically as their voices alternate in a series of nine songs. The profusion of melodic riches is soon being deployed with something like symphonic logic—for instance, the urgent, agitated figure introducing the third song (Waldemar's impetuous ride to Gurre) becomes the main waltz-theme of the fourth (Tove's triumphant welcome). The fifth, Waldemar's 'So tanzen die Engel', with its broad and generous tune, has always been a favourite extract from the work; and Tove's reply (Ex. 17*a*) introduces what is to be the main love theme. A darker and just as persistent element, however, appears with Waldemar's next song, 'It is midnight, and unhallowed spirits rise from forgotten graves' (Ex. 17*b*)—a premonition of the tragedy to come. The sinister chromatic cello motif heard here becomes associated, as the work proceeds, with death and the opening of graves. These two themes give some indication of the work's melodic variety, and Schoenberg's ability even at this stage to introduce highly chromatic material into a comparatively diatonic framework:

Ex. 17

Langsam
TOVE

Nun sag ich dir zum er - sten Mal: "Kö - nig Vol - mer, ich lie be dich!"

Langsam

Tove's Isolde-like reply that they should welcome 'the mighty, the brave-smiling death' leads to the last and finest of the love-songs, Waldemar's calm, fulfilled 'Du wunderliche Tove'. Throughout these nine songs the emotional temperature (and the musical mastery) has steadily increased and motivic connections have been drawn ever tighter; now ensues a great orchestral interlude, a symphonic development of all the main motives containing some of the work's most glorious music and showing Schoenberg to be already the peer of Mahler and Strauss as an

orchestral composer. But its end is sudden and brutal; lyric is abruptly forsaken for narrative in the famous 'Song of the Wood-dove'. Plangent orchestral bird-cries introduce a mezzo-soprano solo, telling of Tove's murder and the numbing grief that overcomes Waldemar. Part I of the *Gurrelieder* ends in tragic gloom, with the suggestion of tolling bells.

Almost the same music opens Part II—which consists of a single, comparatively short song in which Waldemar curses God for Tove's death and prays to become His fool so he may mock His injustice. Though in performance this is usually placed after the interval, it really belongs with Part I, several of whose themes it quickly recalls and metamorphoses. With the Song of the Wood-Dove, Part I had essentially ended with a self-contained episode (so self-contained that Schoenberg later arranged it for voice and chamber orchestra to enable it to be performed on its own); thus 'Part II', returning us to Waldemar's predicament, is really the coda to the work's first half.

Part III, 'The Wild Hunt', then begins with the gloomy Ex. 17b. The graves open; Waldemar calls his vassals to join him in the grisly chase. Baleful horns bellow in answer, and the sound of the hunt approaches—Schoenberg vividly suggests the chink of mail, the scrape of rusty weapons and the rattle of bones in scoring of uncanny precision. Watched by a terrified peasant (bass) the skeletal horde thunders by: Schoenberg gives them an almost entirely contrapuntal, often canonic chorus of barbaric force, supported by the full power of the gigantic orchestra.

Though Waldemar's longing for Tove remains unassuaged, there now arises a fool to mock *his* tyranny. The grotesquely tuneful, complaining 'Song of Klaus the Fool', the jester and common man who has been denied the peace of an honest grave by Waldemar's obsession, is one of the work's high points, a bitter light relief that begins to put extreme romantic attitudes into clearer perspective. It is also a kind of epic inflation of the satirical style Schoenberg had employed in the *Brettlieder*. Waldemar is heard once more, still threatening to storm Heaven itself; but it is mere railing. In a remarkable chorus of despair and weariness, the vassals sink back to their graves with the coming of morning. Shimmering colours under long-held notes on four piccolos presage a quite different 'Wild Hunt', that of the summer wind, which sweeps away the phantoms of the heroic past. It is set as a melodrama, with a speaker

whose part, though assigned pitches, is intended to be less song-like than the *Sprechstimme* of *Pierrot Lunaire*.

We are well past the point where Schoenberg resumed the orchestration in 1911. Had he completed it in 1901, the *Gurrelieder* would still be a great work; but the experience of the ten-year interval makes it greater, and nowhere is that clearer than in this melodrama. Having lived through *Erwartung* and the Five Orchestral Pieces, he now insisted on sparer, clearer, chamber-musical textures, a web of shifting, iridescent colours, and the subtlest instrumental reinforcement of polyphony. So the dual nature of the *Gurrelieder* as a hinge-work between Romanticism and twentieth-century realism is made structurally explicit as it passes, in these final stages, from one sound-world to another. This second 'Hunt' has its own themes: the most important is a kind of smoothed-out version of Ex. 16a; but many other former motives, notably Exx. 15a and b, reappear in transfigured form. When Schoenberg first conceived the melodrama in 1900, he was perhaps inspired by the model of Humperdinck's *Die Königskinder*, premiered in Vienna in 1897. Originally he thought his Speaker should be male, but for the 1914 Leipzig performance the role was taken by Albertine Zehme, the first interpreter of *Pierrot*, convincing Schoenberg that a female speaker was equally acceptable. He came to favour either 'a singer who no longer has the necessary beauty of voice to sing great parts', or a professional actor with some musical knowledge. Contrapuntally this melodrama is the most complex section of the work, but its complexity communicates as the mysterious swirling brightness of an elemental force. The speaker describes the richness and variety of nature, set in motion by the summer wind, and calls upon all creatures to rejoice in life and sunlight.

With its filigree, chamber-musical orchestration, its concentration on the natural world rather than human passions and dreams, and its substitution of the clarity of speech for the hubris of song, it is as if at this point the music stands back from itself and puts its whole post-Wagnerian action and conception into context. And that context is the past: ancient history, long-forgotten tragedy, the seductive stuff of dreams and nightmares. While the ghosts fade, the world goes on, life renews itself for the living. A new day beckons. To quote an apposite line of Tennyson, 'And the new sun rose, bringing the new year': from the end of the melodrama,

Schoenberg brings his gigantic conception to a close by homing in on the key of C. The full chorus enters in a triumphant Hymn to the Sun. With the addition of women's voices this is, incredibly, the only place in the *Gurrelieder* where the entire forces are used together. Musically the Hymn transforms the materials of the prelude, turning its descending main figures into an optimistic rising ones, concluding this astounding lyric music-drama in the most grandiose, unshakably affirmative C major. The expense and difficulty of production have always made performance of the *Gurrelieder* a rare event, but it has never failed to gain an enthusiastic reception. It is unquestionably one of Schoenberg's best-loved works.

A poem by the Swiss writer C. F. Meyer furnished the text for the chorus *Friede auf Erden* (Peace on Earth), Op. 13, which Schoenberg composed in early 1907—a poem which proclaims that the angels' message to the shepherds on the first Christmas Eve will surely become reality at last. 'An illusion for mixed choir', Schoenberg later called it—written at a time when he believed such harmony between human beings was possible. Though characteristically polyphonic in texture, harmony is certainly its most striking feature. Indeed, *Friede auf Erden* proceeds from that very moment in Schoenberg's development when his harmonic language had become so saturated with chromatic refinements that it demanded he should develop entirely new means of tonal organization. (The Second String Quartet was begun the same day that *Friede auf Erden* was completed.)

This choral work—in an almost infinitely expanded D major—is marvellously fertile in exploiting distant key-relationships: notably in the long-drawn-out cadences to the refrain 'Friede, Friede auf der Erde!'. At one time this warm, amply proportioned, richly sonorous chorus was considered 'unsingable'. It is certainly not easy, and in 1911 Schoenberg provided an optional supporting accompaniment for small orchestra—but nowadays it is sung, as he intended, *a cappella*.¹

¹ Schoenberg always conceived *Friede auf Erden* as essentially a vocal work; and in composing the above-mentioned orchestral accompaniment he expended considerable pains to make its part inaudible in performance to any except the singers whose pitch it was meant to support. In fact he took particular pleasure in having, as he believed, achieved this goal of aural invisibility, of making the accompaniment 'disappear'. It is therefore quite incomprehensible that in 2003 Kent Nagano saw fit to perform and record the accompaniment on its own, as an orchestral piece *without voices*, as 'Schoenberg's 1911 orchestral version of *Friede auf Erden*'.

The choral writing in Schoenberg's opera *Die glückliche Hand* and in the unfinished oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter* (discussed in Chapter 14) leaves no doubt of his continuing mastery of the medium. It was not until the closing months of 1925, however, shortly before he departed to take up his professorship in Berlin, that he wrote two fascinating sets of choral pieces in the twelve-note method—the Four Pieces for mixed chorus, Op. 27, and the *Three Satires*, Op. 28.

The first two choruses of Op. 27 are to short poems by Schoenberg himself. 'Unentrinnbar' (Inescapable) celebrates people—like the 'Chosen One' in *Die Jakobsleiter*—who possess 'only the strength to conceive of their mission, and the character that will not let them refuse it'. In 'Du sollst nicht, du musst' (Not 'Thou Shalt'; you must), Schoenberg states what was to become the central theme of *Moses und Aron*:

Thou shalt make for thyself no image!
 For an image restricts,
 confines, ties down
 what must stay unlimited and inconceivable.

Both these pieces are canons, the strictness of the polyphony mirroring the stern philosophy of the texts. The words of the other two pieces, in complete contrast, are poems from Hans Bethge's *Die chinesische Flöte*—the collection of translations from the Chinese which also supplied Mahler with the texts of *Das Lied von der Erde*. 'Mond und Menschen' (Moon and mankind) contrasts the calm splendour of the moon with the confusion, restlessness and inconsistency of human life. Schoenberg sets the poem in a kind of choral-prelude technique, each voice in turn taking a different form of a twelve-note *cantus firmus* while the other voices weave imitative counterpoints about it.

Finally an uncomplicated lyric, 'Der Wunsch des Liebhabers' (The Lover's Wish): so far the choruses have been unaccompanied, but for this one Schoenberg introduces a 'Chinese'-sounding ensemble of mandolin, clarinet, violin, and cello. The resultant little cantata is one of his most charming creations, executed with a beautifully deft, humorous touch. Inseparable from its effect is the fact that the music, though twelve-note, makes a strongly 'tonal' impression, as witness the first choral entry:

Ex. 18

Sü - sses Mond - licht auf den Pflau - men bäu - men in der lau - en. lau - en Nacht

Sü - sses Mond - licht auf den Pflau - men bäu - men in der lau - en. lau - en Nacht

The note-row, which consists of the five ‘black’ notes followed by the seven ‘white’ ones, enables the composer to produce such formations continually; and Schoenberg also isolates and repeats its sixth and seventh notes (E and B at the start of Ex. 18, then E-flat and G-sharp) so that their interval of the fifth (or fourth) gives a strong centre of tonal gravity. The ear, in fact, constantly expects the music to overbalance into traditional diatonicism; instead, it dances merrily into more and more unexpected regions—which it is nonsense to term ‘atonality’. A striking feature of the piece is its rhythmic liveliness: there are three quite distinct rhythmic characters in the vocal lines of Ex. 18, and each is developed throughout. Meanwhile the ‘Chinese’ ensemble keeps up a tinkling background of repeated rhythmic figures, till the delightful little work melts away on liquidly burbling clarinet, softly tapping mandolin and chirruping string harmonics.

The *Satires* hold delights of a different order. Sentiments which, in a lesser composer, might have produced a mere occasional squib, were channelled by Schoenberg’s passionate musicality into a curious but not inconsiderable work that crackles with a steady discharge of sardonic humour. Though the proximate cause of the *Satires*, as he explained in a pugnacious Preface, was the desire ‘to give [younger contemporaries] a warning that it is not good to attack me’, their lasting value is not a polemical one; it is, rather, the almost arrogant delight in music-making which they display. Schoenberg himself acknowledged this when he concluded his Preface with the (almost!) humble words:

I cannot judge whether it is nice of me (it will surely be no nicer than everything else about me) to make fun of much that is well-meant, in many respects talented, and in part deserving of respect, knowing as I do that it is

certainly possible to make fun of everything. Much sadder things included. And much better fun! In any case, I am excused since, as always, I have only done it as well as I can. May others find themselves able to laugh at it all more than I can, since I know, too, how to take it seriously! Maybe I was trying to suggest that also?

The *Satires* are not parodies, except obliquely; they are strict twelve-note compositions whose mockery lies in their mastery, as compared with the efforts of the ‘mannerists’—the chasers after every different musical fashion—ridiculed by Schoenberg’s texts. As in Op. 27 the first two pieces are unaccompanied canons. ‘Am Scheideweg’ (At the crossroads) depicts the poor would-be modernist who cannot make up his mind in which camp to place himself—‘tonal’ or ‘atonal’. The twelve-note theme enacts the dilemma, opening boldly with a C major triad, but then wandering off into strange territory:

Ex. 19

♩ = 112

To - nal od - cr a - ton - al? Nun sagt cin - mal

f *p* *etc*

To - nal

The text of the second piece, ‘Vielseitigkeit’ (Manysidedness), is rather transparently an attack on Stravinsky. ‘Look who’s beating the drum—it’s little Modernsky! He’s got a wig of genuine false hair! Makes him look like Papa Bach—he thinks!’ The music, however, merely gently suggests that, if anyone deserves to be considered Bach’s successor, it should be Schoenberg. It is truly ‘many-sided’, for it may be sung, by turning the page upside-down and beginning at the end, to produce exactly the same music! The difficulty of such an exercise is twofold: first to produce such an intricate, self-reflecting design, second to make true *music* of it—and Schoenberg succeeds on both counts.

There follows a ‘kleine Kantate’ for chorus with viola, cello and piano, entitled *Der Neue Klassizismus* (The New Classicism). Here Schoenberg’s caustic wit boils over into a breath-taking display of sheer compositional virtuosity. His targets are those ‘neo-classicists’ who write in the new,

chic style of vapidly simple tunes with meaninglessly dissonant harmonies. A brief instrumental introduction accordingly presents the note-row in the form of a descending scale of C major combined with a rising scale of D-flat. (The overall tonal implication of the piece is a vastly expanded C major.) A tenor solo announces importantly, 'No more shall I be a Romantic . . . from tomorrow, I write only purest Classical', and the chorus sing the praises of this change 'from today to tomorrow' (*'von heute auf Morgen'*). Fully half the cantata is taken up with a diabolically ingenious fugue to the words of a gratifyingly flexible compositional creed:

Classical perfection,
 Strict in each direction,
 It comes from where it may,
 Where that is, none can say,
 It goes where'er it will:
 That is the modern style.

Out of a final twelve-note cadence the voices blunder onto a triumphant unison C, decorated by the ensemble with all the other notes of the chromatic scale.

In late 1925 and early 1926 Schoenberg added to the *Satires* a 'tonal' Appendix (C major again), to show that he was just as capable of producing contrapuntal wizardries without the 'help' of a style that allowed dissonances and consonances an equal footing. There are three short, related mirror-cans for four voices ('An Aphorism and two Variations'); a jolly little mirror-canon for string quartet; and a more elaborate six-voice riddle canon entitled 'Legitimation als Canon' (The Canon as proof of identity)—this last is dedicated to George Bernard Shaw on his seventieth birthday. Musically these little compositions are comparable to the many other tonal canons, vocal and instrumental, which Schoenberg wrote as occasional pieces throughout his career (see Chapter 13).

In early 1929 he composed two choruses for male voices, 'Glück' (Happiness) and 'Verbundenheit' (Obligation), commissioned by the German Workers' Chorus Association (Deutsche Arbeiter-Sängerbund). About a year later he added four more, and the result constitutes his masterpiece in the field of unaccompanied choral music—the *Six Pieces for Men's Chorus*, Op. 35. The male chorus is a difficult medium whose textures can easily sound thick and clotted. Schoenberg avoids that dan-

ger by a perfect spacing of the individual vocal lines in a very wide range of up to three octaves, and by extremely varied melodic techniques—from the sweetest *cantabile* to the liveliest recitative-like declamation. Schoenberg had, of course, conducted workers' choruses in his youth and had friends on the political left who were closely involved with the movement, such as David Bach. While he had nothing but contempt for the idea of art for 'the masses', he did care considerably that his music might be appreciated by ordinary people who approached it individually and thought about it for themselves, unaffected by the largely hostile views of 'cultured' critics. The workers' choral movement, currently very strong in Germany and already accumulating a modern repertoire of real artistic stature from composers such as his pupil Hanns Eisler, seems to have struck him as an appropriate and welcome medium through which to introduce his ideas to a larger public. Though the music of the Op. 35 choruses is, as usual, predominantly contrapuntal and demanding in technique, it is also clear that Schoenberg in composing them took care to cater for the susceptibilities of workers' choirs.²

There is an emphasis on chordal harmony—especially harmony with a strong diatonic feeling. This is most obvious in 'Verbundenheit', which stands as No. 6 of the set: it is not a serial work at all, but beautifully inhabits a close-harmony world close to Schubert's male-voice quartets (cf. the opening, Ex. 20a). But it is almost as clear in the opening (Ex. 20b) of the chorus 'Hemmung' (Inhibition), which is a twelve-note work. And, though four of the *Six Pieces* are serial, and 'Glück' is highly chromatic, they contain many other examples of such strong key-feeling³—which makes the cycle's culmination in the last calm D minor triad of 'Verbundenheit' both natural and satisfying.

The texts, Schoenberg's own, are among his best poems. Five deal tenderly or ironically with generalized aspects of human experience, particularly *communal* experience. These are: the difficulty of giving voice to

² The early performance history of Op. 35 testifies to his success. Numerous performances of individual movements were given by various workers' choruses before the complete cycle was premiered, frequently repeated before large and appreciative audiences and finally broadcast by thirteen amateur singers belonging to the *Arbeitergesangverein 'Vorwärts'* from Hanau. This group performed Schoenberg's work from memory.

³ In fact Schoenberg at first drafted 'Glück' in a completely different form, as a strict but lustroously tonal canon.

an idea ('Inhibition'); the recognition of natural law, and rebellion against it ('The Law'); awareness of kinship with the rest of humanity ('Means of Expression' and 'Obligation'); and how the nature of happiness lies precisely in its elusiveness ('Happiness'). It is fascinating to see how Schoenberg discovers lively musical forms for, and gives passionate expression to, subjects which could easily remain forbiddingly abstract. All these are basically four-voice choruses. The exception is chorus No. 5, 'Landsknechte' (Yeomanry). The most extended and elaborate setting, this is a real *tour-de-force*—a slow march in eight real parts, the voices providing their own rhythmic accompaniment in a veritable fusillade of

Ex. 20

Nicht zu langsam

Sei ge - seg - net! Ru - he

Man hilft zur Welt dir kom - men; man gräbt ein Grab für

Sei ge - seg - net! Ru - he

sanft! Gu - te Bess' - rung!

dieh, man flickt die Wun - den dir im Spi - tal etc.

sanft! Gu - te Bess' - rung!

Mässig ($\text{♩} = 88$)

Ist ihn - en die Spra - che ver - sagt?

Ist ihn - en die Spra - che ver - sagt?

Ist ihn - en die Spra - che ver - sagt?

onomatopoeic drumming and trudging effects. The marching troopers of the title—exemplars of unthinking humanity—forage, pillage, rape, fight among themselves, and are finally slaughtered by an unseen enemy, never aware that there may be more to existence than to live for the present moment. This is, however, only the most striking number in what must be accounted one of Schoenberg's most richly varied and rewarding works. If 'Verbundenheit' is the most inviting approach to the *Six Pieces*, the other five, in time, yield equal delights.

His remaining choral works were written in America. *Kol Nidre*, Op. 39, for speaker, chorus and orchestra, was composed at the behest of a rabbi in Los Angeles, who also suggested the work's form. The speaker tells, and the orchestra illustrates, a legend from the Kabbala wherein God, having created light, crushed it into a myriad sparks that can only be seen by the faithful (including repentant sinners); then follows the singing of 'Kol Nidre', the chief liturgy for the release from obligations on the Jewish Day of Atonement. The text's original function had been to receive back into the community those Jews who in times of persecution had gone over to Christianity; so its personal significance for Schoenberg must have been considerable.

Although *Kol Nidre* is a tuneful 'tonal' work in G minor, the influence of serialism is stamped on all its musical processes. The traditional 'Kol Nidre' melody in liturgical use (of Spanish origin) was, Schoenberg considered, hardly a melody at all, but a collection of flourish-like motives resembling each other to various degrees. He therefore took certain of these and submitted them to what can only be described as serial treatment within a tonal framework. He preserved their melodic integrity, so that the music has at times a distinct 'Oriental', quasi-improvisatory character. But its construction is thoroughly disciplined: every bar, every idea is derived from the given melodic fragments, whether by mirror-forms or interpenetration of motives.

Kol Nidre is a colourful score: the dramatic introduction includes some imaginatively telling orchestration, notably the graphic description of the creation of light, with a bell-stroke, flickering trumpet, and whirling flexatone trill. The singing of the 'Kol Nidre' itself develops as a noble, purposeful march-movement with a fine swinging main tune, and recapitulates the music of the introduction in altered forms in a central section. The work dies away to a peaceful ending in a confident G major.

This fine and easily assimilable music has remained almost totally unknown.

Similar in layout, but raised to the highest power of genius, is *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Op. 46, for narrator, men's chorus and orchestra—perhaps the most dramatic thing Schoenberg ever wrote, summing up one of the grimmest tragedies of the twentieth century in the space of six excoriating minutes. It is his personal tribute and memorial to the Jews who died under the Nazi persecution (and by extension to all victims of political tyranny). Schoenberg's text, which he said was based on a story that had been reported to him by survivors from the Warsaw Ghetto, probably draws upon several different accounts which he had heard. The narrator has lived in the sewers to Warsaw after escaping—he does not know how—from a concentration camp. He recounts how, in the camp, a group of prisoners are wakened before dawn and beaten. They are ordered to count their numbers out loud, so the sergeant may know how many are left to be herded into the gas-chambers; but in the middle of the counting they break spontaneously into the ancient Hebrew song of triumph, 'Shema Yisroel'—a last assertion of their human dignity against the exterminators.

The story called forth from Schoenberg music of the same blazing intensity as his recent String Trio. *A Survivor from Warsaw* is a twelve-note work, and perhaps the best of all introductions to the method—simply as an overwhelming demonstration of twelve-note music's fitness for communicating passionate human emotion. The explosive setting deepens and makes more immediate the impact of every simple, shocking spoken phrase, enhanced by a drastic economy and precision of musical gesture. In the very first bar, a shrieking twelve-note reveille for two trumpets (Ex. 21a) establishes the nightmarish, fear-ridden atmosphere of the death camps. This is sustained by the vivid, fragmented orchestration—all the characteristically 'Expressionist' details of string *col legno* and harmonics and flutter-tonguing brass reappear with unsurpassed rightness—while the narrator, the 'Survivor' from Warsaw, relates his memories of the strange episode, sometimes breaking into shrill German for the sergeant's voice, against a background of militaristic percussion. But not all the music is simply a brilliant evocation of terror. Towards the end, the broken, dejected rhythms of the 'counting out' gather speed in a tremendous *accelerando* 'like a stampede of wild horses'; at last the full orchestra enters,

setting, for he was also sketching an unfinished work for chorus and orchestra to his own text, *Israel Exists Again*. Op. 50A is a twelve-note piece, but he at first placed it with the diatonic *Three Folksongs*, Op. 49 (see Chapter 13), and the original edition bore the opus number 49B. Its polyphonic construction has, in fact, much in common with the *Folksongs*, and we may surmise that subject-matter, rather than any artificial stylistic division, led him to alter it to Op. 50A: all three works in Op. 50 deal with specifically Jewish historical and religious issues.

‘Gottes Wiederkehr’ is the last phrase in the poem, and towards it the whole composition moves—the idea of the ‘return’ is continually embodied in the symmetry or near-symmetry of its individual lines (cf. for instance, Ex. 11a in Chapter 6). Other things ‘return’ too in this deceptively simple work—most of all a harmony that is ‘tonal’ in the broad sense to all but the tone-deaf.

In contrast, *De Profundis*—a Hebrew setting of Psalm 130 (‘Out of the depths have I cried to thee, O Lord’)—is turbulent and anguished. The idea of striving upwards towards God is a central theme in Schoenberg. That he should realize it powerfully in *De Profundis* is no surprise: but the texture of the realization is highly original. While a section of the chorus (or sometimes solo voices) sing the Hebrew text, the remaining sections—their rhythms notated exactly but the pitch hardly indicated—cry, whisper or shout the same phrases. The effect is intensely dramatic, like the confused response of a congregation, or giving the effect of a multitude of individual souls ‘crying from the depths’ by whatever means of expression each can command. The music is dodecaphonic, though again with significant relaxations of earlier serial rules. A comparatively rare example of true six-part singing, just before the end, shows Schoenberg’s twelve-note harmony at its most refined, with (despite all the differences in style) an almost Bach-like strength.



Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra

SCHOENBERG'S EARLIEST ORCHESTRAL EFFORTS WERE MORE tentative and uncertain than his youthful output of songs and chamber music. The earliest orchestral score by Schoenberg that survives—perhaps the first he ever attempted—is a short piece for strings and harp, with a solo violin, apparently entitled *Notturmo*. This was long thought to be lost, though for several decades scholars were dimly aware of an 'Adagio for strings and harp' in Schoenberg's hand—of unknown date, but clearly from the beginning of his career—that was among the many manuscripts acquired by the great collector Hans Moldenhauer. After Moldenhauer's death in 1987 the manuscript found its way to the Library of Congress, and in 1993 the 'Adagio' received what was thought to be its world premiere, in Weimar.

More recently Antony Beaumont has edited the work for publication, and has convincingly argued that this 'Adagio' (which is not the title but merely the tempo-marking; even that was altered from 'Andante') must in fact be the supposedly lost '*Notturmo* for strings with violin solo' which was performed in Vienna, under Zemlinsky's direction, in a concert of the 'Polyhymnia' Music Society on 2 March 1896. As related on page 34, the Polyhymnia was an amateur orchestra of modest talents, but it looks from this piece as if they had a strong first-desk violin and a more than competent harpist, since Schoenberg allows them to shine. It's likely, though not certain, that in the performance he himself played the first

cello part, which carries his fingerings. The only known review of the concert commended his piece, justly, as 'very atmospheric'.

The *Notturmo* is therefore a product of the comparatively short period (which was over by 1897) during which Schoenberg was—however informally—Zemlinsky's pupil in matters of form and counterpoint. In fact the part-writing is good, the form succinct. Although there is little as yet of Schoenberg's individual voice, the romantic ardour, expressive mixture of diatonic and chromatic harmony, hymn-like melody, and keen sense of instrumental colour would all remain characteristic, and they point already towards the world of the sextet *Verklärte Nacht* which he wrote three years later.

His next orchestral essays were equally modest. In 1896 Schoenberg began writing a Serenade for small orchestra. Perhaps after the manner of Zemlinsky's teacher Robert Fuchs (who was known as '*Serenaden-Fuchs*' for his copious output in this genre), it was modestly planned in three movements, Andante, Scherzo, and Finale—but he only finished the Andante, leaving the beginnings of the other two movements. This was followed in 1897 by two consciously archaic essays—a Gavotte and Musette for strings and a set of *Waltzes*, also for strings, rather in the manner of Schubert's sequences of short waltzes and Ländler.¹

A much more ambitious orchestral essay was the symphonic poem *Frühlings Tod*, after Lenau, which Schoenberg completed in short score during 1898; but this too remained still-born, as he only wrote out a portion of the full score—although the fragment demonstrates an impressive command of the late-Romantic orchestra and a rapid assimilation of post-Wagnerian and Straussian harmonic technique.

Nevertheless, by the time Schoenberg completed his first substantial orchestral composition, the very large symphonic poem *Pelleas und Melisande* after the drama by Maeterlinck (1902–3), he had scored a large part of the *Gurrelieder* and had, moreover, been engaged for some years on the chore of orchestrating operettas. The solid value of this drudgery (he calculated he had written 6,000 pages!) should not be underestimated. It helped him become, very early, a master of the craft of instrumentation. In this connexion we should also mention his orches-

¹ This work, which has been performed under the title *Fröhliche Walzer*, is quite a recent discovery. There are ten complete waltzes; an eleventh is unfinished.

tration of Heinrich Schenker's *Syrische Tänze*, which was conducted in Berlin in 1903 by another master in this field, Busoni, who afterwards declared it 'bore witness to astounding orchestral virtuosity'.

In *Pelleas* Schoenberg is already reaching out beyond the rich late-Romantic orchestral style of the *Gurrelieder*. The work marks, in fact, a new stage in his development. As in *Verklärte Nacht* (whose string-orchestra version did not yet exist), he follows the action of his literary source quite closely, while at the same time he builds a musical structure of quasi-symphonic scope. At the time, we should note, Schoenberg in *Pelleas und Melisande*, and Zemlinsky in his exactly contemporary *Die Seejungfrau*, saw themselves at the time as bringing 'Brahmsian' principles—by which we must understand the principles of 'abstract' symphonic architecture—to bear on the anecdotal and illustrative content of programme music.

In 1920, Alban Berg published a 'guide' to his master's *Pelleas*, offering a still influential but controversial interpretation of the work as a self-sufficient one-movement 'Symphony in D minor', subsuming the usual four movements of a symphony, plus introduction and epilogue. This is to take the 'Brahmsian' interpretation to an extreme. Yet when Schoenberg himself wrote an analysis of *Pelleas* in 1949 he discussed it entirely in terms of the musical representation of the action of Maeterlinck's drama.

I tried to mirror every detail of it, with only a few omissions and slight changes of the order of the scenes. . . . Perhaps, as frequently happens in music, there is more space devoted to the love scenes.

Nevertheless, he would not have entirely rejected a 'symphonic' reading of the music. His work shuns the anecdotal naturalism which is such a feature of Richard Strauss's symphonic poems: no bleating sheep à la *Don Quixote*—indeed, unlike Debussy, Schoenberg omitted the scene of the child Yniold with the flock of sheep. And he made a much more significant omission: Golaud's father Arkel, the still, prophetic centre of Maeterlinck's play and Debussy's opera, will not be found in the hectic and passionate world of Schoenberg's score, whose physical solidity of tone and vast instrumental apparatus might be felt to be at variance with the enigmatic circumspection of Maeterlinck's vision. However, Maeterlinck's 'perfumed' and 'dream-like' text frees itself from realism in

order to concentrate on human emotions and psychological states. Clearly this is what Schoenberg found so congenial in the subject, and it is these states above all which he explores with the utmost intensity. The drama is articulated through its three main figures—Melisande, Golaud, and Pelleas—characterized not by Wagnerian Leitmotifs but by individual themes, all of which undergo considerable development and variation in the course of the work.

In fact, with the scoring of the *Gurrelieder* partly behind him, Schoenberg goes far beyond Wagner in the size of his orchestra (seventeen woodwind, eighteen brass, eight percussion, two harps, and strings) and in the constantly changing textures he draws from it. The score contains some quite new instrumental effects, notably the trombone *glissandi* (soon to be the stock-in-trade of any 'modern' composer) that he uses to illustrate the scene in the vaults.

Most remarkable of all, however, is the polyphonic density, which surpasses anything in Schoenberg's earlier work and shows his concern to communicate as much as possible in the shortest space, packing every bar with contrapuntal invention, imitative passages, or multiple combinations of themes. Ex. 22, near the beginning of the work, shows a beautiful and relatively straightforward instance: Melisande's mournful motif presented in canon on the woodwind, while the horns sound Golaud's more energetic theme for the first time.

Ex. 22

Ob. 2
Ob. 1
Eb Cl.
Ob. 3
E.H.
3 Hns.
p weich, aber bestimmt, hervor

There are also occasions when the sheer contrapuntal virtuosity appears self-defeating, the textures choked and the rhythms unclear. For all its riches, *Pelleas* is an uneven work, showing that Schoenberg had not yet fully mastered the new style he was trying to call into being. Too much of it can appear, on first hearing, to consist of hectic and unstable thrashing about. Like other works of this period, it gets better as it progresses, even though the earlier stages contain some of the most prophetic music. Schoenberg himself summed it up fairly in a letter to Zemlinsky in 1918 when he admitted that it was far removed from perfection because too much of it was devoted to long-winded exposition. The later music (starting with the comparatively conventional 'Love Scene' which is nevertheless welcome for its direct melodic appeal) flows better, and the final Epilogue (the Death of Mélisande) is inspired music of undeniable power, sinking at last into grand Wagnerian gloom on muted brass. Despite one's reservations, the work deserves the toe-hold it has maintained in the orchestral repertoire since 1910.

The Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op. 9 (1906), stands in direct line of descent from *Pelleas*. Here, however, the forces have been reduced to a mere fifteen players (eight woodwind, two horns, and string quintet), ensuring clarity of line; and the structural compression is far more successful. Half as long as *Pelleas* in performance time, the single movement has a taut, concise form which suggests the broad outlines of a sonata-design with episodes, but can also be analysed as five 'sub-movements' thus: (i) self-contained exposition functioning as first movement, (ii) scherzo, (iii) development of the substance of (i), (iv) slow movement, (v) finale which is both recapitulation and development of themes of (i) and (iv). Within these firm outlines two qualities characterize the piece—its spirited, optimistic vigour and its extraordinary contrapuntal elaboration. The second makes the first extremely necessary if the music is not to tie itself in polyphonic knots; but from the first statement of the horn theme (Ex. 5a in Chapter 6) which Schoenberg said was to express 'riotous rejoicing' and which presides over the proceedings at each turning-point in the structure, the music has an irresistible drive that carries all before it, however ambiguously chromatic the harmony. And ambiguous it often is, with the fourth-chords, whole-tone themes, and other features apparent in Ex. 5. There is no lack of

expansiveness or emotion in this material; but the clarity of the scoring also saves it from any risk of amorphousness.

Schoenberg's was not the first 'Chamber Symphony' to be written. He may well have been aware, for instance, of the *Sinfonia da Camera* of Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, a lengthy piece in the conventional four movements, composed in Munich in 1901 and only using an ensemble of eleven instruments. Or the *Kammersymphonie* of Paul Juon, written as recently as 1905 and scored for nine players. But Schoenberg's score redefined at a stroke the potential importance of the genre. He always believed it was one of his 'very best works'. 'It is my ewe lamb,' he wrote to the Russian conductor Alexander Siloti, '...and yet up to now (owing to bad performances) it has hardly been understood by anyone' (Letter 26). That was in 1914. In the early years of the Chamber Symphony's existence, the technical demands raised by its combination of chamber scoring and dynamic virtuosity caused serious problems. In 1916, in connexion with his Chamber Symphony No. 2, Schoenberg confided in a letter to Zemlinsky that he would score the new work for a normal small orchestra, and probably re-score its predecessor as well, as 'these solo strings against so many wind instruments are a mistake'. (In fact the wind-heavy, string-light balance of the First Chamber Symphony became an obvious model for many of the 'neoclassical' scores produced by other composers—Weill, Eisler, Hindemith, for example—during the 1920s.) In the event, in 1922 and again in 1935 Schoenberg *did* make versions of Chamber Symphony No. 1 for full orchestra—the former somewhat rough and ready, the latter an interesting and artful transcription which deserves to be better known, not least because it involves some actual reworking of the piece's substance.

These orchestrations do not, however, transform Op. 9 into a conventional—or even unconventional—'symphony for full orchestra', any more than Schoenberg's remarkable orchestral transcription of Brahms's G minor Piano Quartet (see below, p. 269) turns that work, as he jokingly claimed, into 'Brahms's Fifth Symphony'. The contrapuntal intricacy of Schoenberg's Op. 9, like that of the Brahms Quartet, is that of a work of chamber music. For all its ebullience it remains intimate, enclosed, presenting its material with a highly personal immediacy, not with the epic spaciousness which the form had attained through the course

of the Austro-German symphonic tradition. From this angle it is possible to see that Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony, packing a tremendous density of content into a small musical space both in terms of duration and instrumentation, constitutes a kind of critique of the hugely extended symphonic forms of Bruckner and Mahler. Despite its highly organized construction it is a stage on his journey towards the intensely subjective, intuitional music of the inner world, of the subconscious, that would shortly pour forth in the 'Expressionist' compositions of 1908–9.

The symphonic repertoire and tradition from Mozart to Mahler had an immense significance for Schoenberg, and he clearly felt a powerful need to contribute to it. Yet there is no work that one can unequivocally label 'Schoenberg's Symphony'. In 1900, contemporary with the start of composing the *Gurrelieder*, he did make a rather promising beginning with a Symphony in G minor, but this remained a fragment—part of an exposition in short score, with the portentous opening bars put into in full score for a Strauss–Mahler sized orchestra. A second symphonic attempt, also in G minor, of 1905, seems never to have progressed beyond a few lines in a sketchbook. As for the Second Chamber Symphony, begun immediately after the completion of Op. 9, this already seems to retreat from Op. 9's vigorous critique of the genre. It appears more at ease with its eventually enlarged instrumentation to the dimensions of a classical orchestra—but its two-movement form remains extremely unclassical, lyric rather than epic. As we have seen, however (p. 00), from 1912 to 1914 Schoenberg essayed a 'choral symphony' which for physical and orchestral size would have out-done anything found in Bruckner, Mahler, Havergal Brian, or indeed the entire western symphonic canon—an attempt, perhaps, to combine all the inner, spiritual resources of the 'Expressionist' works with the largest possible epic, external, architectural traditions of the symphonic form. Yet the result of these strivings was not a symphony at all but an oratorio, *Die Jakobsleiter*, which itself was fated to remain an awesome torso.

As just mentioned, Schoenberg's immediate course on completing Op. 9 was to begin a Second Chamber Symphony, intended for a very similar and only slightly larger ensemble of nineteen solo instruments. Work on this piece, however, proceeded slowly, interrupted by the composition of String Quartet No. 2, which soon absorbed most of his

concentration. By September 1907 he had drafted most of a refined and elegiac first movement of the new Chamber Symphony and the beginning of a second. In 1908 he began writing out a full score but eventually laid it aside, and only in November 1911 did he return to the piece, extending what he had so far written of the second movement—a quick sonata form—to near the end of the exposition. Another five-year gap intervened, until December 1916, when Schoenberg informed Zemlinsky that he had decided to complete the work:

Two movements have been written, one is complete with the exception of the final bars and the other is half-finished. I shall merge these into *one* movement. This is the first part, because I plan a second part, but it is still possible that I shall abandon this plan. Consequently, I shall *not* compose the work for solo instruments but shall immediately write an entirely new score for (medium-size) orchestra. . . . I hope to complete [the work] in a few days—if nothing gets in the way!

Yet there is no sign that he actually resumed the composition at this time. Instead, Schoenberg seems briefly to have toyed with idea of accepting the Second Chamber Symphony's fragmentary state and turning it into a Melodrama for speaker and orchestra entitled *Wendepunkt* (Turning Point). A draft text for this conception survives: at the point where the second movement broke off, the speaker would begin with the obviously symbolic line 'To continue further along this path was not possible'. The text as a whole charts the progress of a soul which, from contentment and then elation, falls into deep depression:

Just when the accumulated power should burst forth it fails;
a small but perfidious incident—a speck of dust in the clockwork—is capable of hindering its development.

After the collapse comes despair, then sorrow. . . .

Seeking to understand the failure and depression the soul finds the causes within itself:

. . . But that

does not mean an end; it is on the contrary a beginning; a new way to salvation appears, the only, the eternal way. To find this was the purpose of all previous experience.

Clearly by this time the 'eternal way' was not one that allowed the musical completion of the Second Chamber Symphony, at least not in the stylistic terms in which it had been conceived. It represented by now an old 'path', one that had been superseded by the dramatic stylistic revolution that Schoenberg had undergone in 1908–9. It would remain 'impossible to continue further' for another twenty-three years (see p. 193). Already Schoenberg's orchestral output had struck off at a radically new angle in the *Five Orchestral Pieces*, Op. 16, of 1909.

Only three years separate these pieces from the First Chamber Symphony; but stylistically the gap is a gigantic one. The collective title clearly asserts the 'unsymphonic' nature of this cycle of five deeply and variously 'atmospheric' movements. Here we find the totally chromatic language of 'Expressionism' in full flood, caught up in a sometimes exhilarating, sometimes terrifying *now* of ever-expanding horizons. They have organic structure, recognizable themes, an overall key-centre, and harmonies that do, in their fashion, direct and punctuate the flow of events; but one hears them first, as did their earliest astounded audiences, in terms of frenzied activity and utter stasis, violent dissonance and weird tone-colours, incredibly complex polyphony and an outpouring of diverse ideas bewildering in its fervour—art used to intensify, not to render acceptable, the reality of the artist's innermost vision.

Schoenberg, at the suggestion of his publisher, eventually gave titles to the pieces, and a note about this in his diary for January 1912 gives a revealing glimpse of his attitude to the work:

... I've found titles that are at least possible. On the whole, unsympathetic to the idea. For the wonderful thing about music is that one can say everything in it, so that he who knows understands everything; and yet one hasn't given away one's secrets—the things one doesn't admit even to oneself. But titles give you away! Besides—whatever was to be said has been said, by the music. Why, then, words as well? ... Now the titles I may provide give nothing away, because some of them are very obscure and others highly technical. To wit: I Premonitions (everybody has those). II The past (everybody has that, too). III Chord-colours (technical). IV Peripeteia (general enough, I think). V The Obligato (perhaps better the 'fully-developed' or the 'endless') Recitative. However, there should be a note that these

titles were added for technical reasons of publication and not to give a 'poetic' content.²

'Poetic' or not, these titles do smooth the way in for many listeners. Pieces I and IV are in some respects similar: both are highly emotional and extremely concentrated, bursting forth with an explosive 'exposition' of multifarious motivic shapes and then launching into a fast-moving, wide-ranging development of them. In I this takes the form of a hectic accumulation of *ostinato*-patterns over a long-held pedal chord, dying away to an unquiet ticking before a brusque coda. In IV (for whose opening see Ex. 6) the tone is more overtly tragic, the development more fragmented; the *coup de grâce* comes in a curt, slashing cadence. In strong contrast stand pieces II and III. II indeed admits that there *is* a 'past', with its firm anchorage to D minor and dreamily expressive opening tune (cf. Ex. 7)—as if Debussy's sad *Gigues* had been slowed down into near-immobility. The vestiges of a ternary form, the more decorative use of instrumental colour (in a tinkling celesta *ostinato*, for instance), the delicately canonic textures combine to make this the most easily assimilable of the set.

III is the work's still central point—the stillness of the fixed stare that, held long enough, persuades a landscape to yield up all its secrets. It is a musical enactment of the 'gaze': it does not represent a landscape in sound, rather it represents the act of contemplating that landscape. There are no themes. The 'colours' of the title are seen in two instrumental combinations that spell out the same chord (Ex. 23*a*). Blending imperceptibly from one 'chord-colour' into the other, the harmonic content begins to

Ex. 23

(a)

2 Fl.
Cl.
Bsn.
E.H.
Tpt. con sord.
Bsn.
Hn.
Solo vla.
Solo Cb.
Cb.
etc.
Hp. & Cl.
p

² Quoted in Rufer, *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg* (London, 1962), p. 34.

change, subtly, gradually, note by note. The texture loosens: the orchestra becomes a shifting kaleidoscope in which points of colour change and mingle with ever-increasing frequency. A leaping figure (Ex. 23*b*) initiates movement, and for a moment the whole fabric comes alive in a shimmering turbulence of individual parts. Then it comes to rest again, returning to the opening chord and its colours. Actually, this magical little movement did *not* simply arise as a technical exercise: Schoenberg later admitted that in it he had tried to capture the impression of sunlight on the water of Lake Traunsee, as he had seen it once at dawn; he even pointed out a 'jumping fish' (our Ex. 23*b*). As for Piece V, its structure is the freest of all, one that seems to enact the very process of exploration. Its 'endless recitative' unfolds continuously as a single shapely wide-ranging melodic line: a magnificent demonstration of Schoenberg's conception of 'musical prose', steadily growing without repetition of any of its various sections. With something of the character of an Austrian *ländler*, it winds its way through a labyrinth of surrounding polyphony in anything up to eight parts,³ always changing colour as it passes from instrument to instrument, arching over the whole range of the orchestra, ever journeying onward.

In his 1912 Berlin Diary, Schoenberg recounts that he spoke about the principles behind this movement in his lectures at the Stern Conservatoire:

... I managed to present and substantiate my ideas on the 'obligato recitative' (for some strange reason I forgot to mention this term) rather clearly. But not completely. The idea goes deeper: the unutterable is said in a free form (= recitative). In this it comes close to nature, which likewise cannot be completely grasped, but which is effective nonetheless...

The general character of this last of the Five Orchestral Pieces is lyrical, but the impression is of serious and sometimes impassioned speech, 'endlessly' expounding, conveying a message from the inner to the outer world. Beyond the tragic 'Peripeteia', life goes on 'nonetheless' in this positive finale.

Nearly twenty years elapsed before Schoenberg produced his next purely orchestral composition: meanwhile, of course, he had written for orchestra with amazing daring in such works as *Erwartung*, *Die glückliche*

³ Here Schoenberg uses for the first time the *Hauptstimme* sign to **H** indicate to the conductor which is the principal voice. It became almost a standard feature of his later scores.

Hand and *Die Jakobsleiter*. It used to be thought that he had, in 1920, begun to compose an orchestral Passacaglia whose extant fragment strikingly foreshadowed the twelve-note method. However it is now known that the manuscript in question dates not from 1920 but from 1926, when the method had already reached considerable sophistication—and that it is in fact an early draft, soon abandoned, of the *Variations for Orchestra* Op. 31, which he completed in 1928. This is surely one of Schoenberg's greatest works, and may be regarded as the point at which the twelve-note method, growing and ripening in the smaller forms or more restricted ensembles of Opp. 25–30, bursts into full flower. Expansive in duration (about twenty-three minutes), brilliant in orchestral resourcefulness, utterly personal in sound and character, it also stands firmly in the great orchestral-variation tradition of Brahms, Reger, Elgar, and others.

The work divides into twelve sections—Introduction, an original Theme, nine Variations proper, and Finale. The Introduction (briefly described on p. 140) foreshadows various significant melodic elements, not all immediately related to the Theme. One is the name B-A-C-H, spelled out mysteriously by a solo trombone ('B' is B-flat, 'H' is B-natural in German nomenclature) as a kind of invocation of Schoenberg's great forerunner: the name is also a four-note motif that gains increasing importance in the work as a whole. The Theme is then simply stated by cellos and violins. Example 12*b* (see p. 141) shows it in full. It divides into two twelve-bar halves. Each of these halves is further divided into 5 + 7 bars, with the fives and sevens themselves subdivided in various ways. This twice 5 + 7 metrical division is reflected in all the ensuing Variations except the last.

The Variations seldom obscure the Theme's physiognomy. Schoenberg preserves its basic contours, its phrase-lengths, often its original pitches and rhythms, fairly strictly: the variation process is more often one of decoration, or of using the Theme as the binding thread in a polyphonic web as other motives are spun around it. A notable feature of the Variations is the way in which they alternate the full power of the orchestra with the intimate sonorities of a few solo instruments. They cover an enormous range of mood and character. Variation I (*Moderato*) is a nimble development of the Theme in the bass, in a fragmented, mosaic-like orchestral texture. II (*Adagio*) features solo wind instruments, violin and cello in a calm canonic conversation. III (*Mässig*) is brusque, the

Theme blared out on horn and trumpet against a vigorous pattern of repeated semiquavers. Harp and mandoline maintain the pattern into Variation IV (*Walzer-tempo*), a stylized dance. Variation V (*Bewegt*) is the work's central climax, breaking up the Theme more forcefully than hitherto—a study in minor ninths, major sevenths and semitones, wherein the B-A-C-H motive makes a quite natural appearance. VI (*Andante*) is scored for similar forces to II, but its dance-like character parallels IV. VII (*Langsam*) constitutes the work's main slow section: a magical, dream-like episode in which the Theme appears in florid decoration, mainly on solo woodwind, lapped around by a gentle tracery of rocking figures on celesta, glockenspiel, harp, piccolo and solo strings. VIII (*Sehr rasch*) is impetuous but determined, with a continuous quaver pulse that is syn-copated by unexpected shifts of accent; IX (*L'istesso Tempo*) continues the canonic exchanges in a lighter texture, with several momentary rallentandos which intimate that the Variations are about to make way for something else. The 'something else' proves to be the large-scale Finale—a synoptic epilogue which opens with a shimmering recall of the B-A-C-H motive and makes prominent use of it until the end. Two contrary impulses are at work as episode succeeds episode: that of lingering nostalgically in the sound-world of the gentler variations, and that of driving to a decisive conclusion. The tempo of these latter attempts steadily increases to *Presto*—at which point we hear a new version of the Theme in combination with B-A-C-H:

Ex. 24

Presto ($\text{♩} = 120$)

Ob. Vl. C.A. & Mandoline

(B) (A) (C) (H) etc.

but there is a last tender *adagio* moment for the cor anglais to recall the Theme's original form before the cheerful noise of the helter-skelter coda.

After Schoenberg had solved in the *Variations* the special problems inherent in scoring twelve-note music for a full orchestra, further works for large forces followed in rapid succession. After the hour-long comic

opera *Von Heute auf Morgen*, Op. 32 (1928–9) he produced, in 1929–30, the *Begleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene* (*Accompaniment to a Film-Scene*), premiered in Berlin by Otto Klemperer in November 1930, scored for an almost Classical-sized orchestra with the addition of piano and a fair amount of percussion.

Schoenberg was never to compose an actual film-score (as Chapter 4 relates, he was nearly engaged by MGM to write the music for a movie of Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth*). He was, however, deeply interested in the cinema and its expressive possibilities—and the 'imaginary' film-sequence embodied (rather than accompanied!) by his Op. 34 clearly belongs to the haunted, Expressionist world of the silent films of Fritz Lang or Robert Wiene. By the same token, the music is a direct development, using the new vocabulary of the twelve-note method, from the *Angst*-ridden masterpieces of Schoenberg's own Expressionist period, such as *Erwartung* and *Die glückliche Hand*. It is, however, much more compressed—a mere synopsis of spiritual torment. The approach, indeed, is perhaps more objective, the emotions no longer experienced with quite the same intimidating immediacy—we do not live so much through the 'Angstraum' itself as much as a photographic record of it.

The work, in a free variation form, plays continuously but divides into three parts, to which Schoenberg gave the self-explanatory titles 'Drohende Gefahr' ('Threatening Danger'), 'Angst' (in this context to be understood as panic fear) and 'Katastrophe'. Theodor Adorno, reviewing the first performance (by the Frankfurt Radio Orchestra on 28 April 1930, conducted by Hans Rosbaud), described the composition as 'a succinct introduction to twelve-note technique'. The textures are much simpler than in the Op. 31 *Variations*, tending to accelerate as the catastrophe approaches. In the first section the 'danger' looms gradually through a phantasmagoria of waltz-rhythms, as if hovering over a spectral ballroom scene. The following sections employ the full range of atmospheric orchestral devices which Schoenberg had evolved in the previous twenty years for the evocation of hallucinatory and other-worldly states: string harmonics and *col legno* writing, flutter-tongue brass, and so on; and the piano is used to give a certain hard, brittle quality to the sonorities. Much is made of the traditionally 'tragic' interval of the minor third, and an E flat minor tonality seems to lurk just out-of-shot of the mind's camera. The closing pages, when the 'catastrophe' has passed, return to the slow

tempo of the work's opening with a sense of numbed stillness, and have a weird lyric pathos unusual even in Schoenberg's output. The *Begleitungsmusik* is a highly effective piece, which suggests that, given the chance, Schoenberg might have proved an excellent film composer. Certainly many lesser composers have drawn upon his—and its—characteristics for their own film scores.

The Suite in G major, for string orchestra, of 1934, is the first work Schoenberg completed after his arrival in America. He occasionally called it his 'Suite in Old Style'. Between it and the *Begleitungsmusik* had come the two curious Concertos based on eighteenth-century models (discussed in Chapter 13), and it is a logical continuation of their concerns: a twentieth-century glance back at an older style, but this time employing original themes. Like Grieg's well-known (and not dissimilar) *Holberg* Suite, Schoenberg's G major Suite employs old Baroque dance-forms (the movements are Overture, Adagio, Minuet, Gavotte, and Gigue); and unlike his own Piano Suite, Op. 25, does so in an overtly tonal, non-serial context, though with personal adaptations of their harmonic style.

Schoenberg originally had in mind a work for the repertoire of American college orchestras, to prepare them for modern music and performance techniques without, in his wry words, 'giving them a premature dose of "Atonality Poison"'. When he showed his preliminary sketches to some American colleagues at Chautauqua, however, they declared the score would be too difficult for students. But they were impressed by the materials themselves and encouraged him to complete the Suite as a work for professional string ensembles, with the hope that eventually college orchestras would also be able to play it. The result is certainly a tough work to play (as even Otto Klemperer found when he conducted the first performance in May 1935)—but its difficulties are testing ones, and the quality of the music makes them well worth overcoming. For the listener, moreover, the Suite is most approachable, blending a powerful sense of what remains valid within a historical genre with the composer's own formidable technical skill and unrestrained melodic invention. If the slow movement (the *Adagio*) is not one of Schoenberg's most memorable inventions, the other four more than make up for it with their colour, rhythmic vitality and splendid tunes.

The Violin Concerto, Op. 36, is a very different matter. This, the first really major work he composed in his exile in the United States, was

commissioned by the American violinist Louis Krasner, who had studied with various members of the Schoenberg circle in Vienna and also commissioned the concerto by Alban Berg. Schoenberg started work on his concerto in 1934, before Berg began his—but by the time Schoenberg's concerto was finished in September 1936, Berg was dead; *his* concerto had already received several performances and was progressing rapidly into the standard repertoire. By contrast, the Schoenberg concerto had to wait another four years before its premiere—in Philadelphia on 6 December 1940, with Krasner as soloist and the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. (Schoenberg was unable to attend because of teaching commitments, and a proposed live broadcast, which he hoped to hear between classes at UCLA, was cancelled.) Stokowski—who had been obliged to rebuke members of the audience for booing or hissing the work—repeated it the following day, but five years would pass before the next performance (in which Krasner performed under Dmitri Mitropoulos), and Schoenberg's concerto has only slowly won acceptance. As Krasner once commented, it 'is a totally different work [from the Berg] . . . Schoenberg proudly conceived his concerto in grand style and with a flair for the violin. It is knowingly designed and reflects his eagerness to explore new challenges for the instrument'.

The challenges were so severe that a critic once told Schoenberg that the work would remain unplayed until violinists had evolved a sixth finger. ('I can wait', he replied.) The violin part includes huge intervals, vast-spread chords, double-stopping in harmonics; the result is, technically, one of the most taxing works in the repertoire, yet one in which, paradoxically, virtuoso display *per se* is almost entirely avoided. Although his preferred instrument was the cello, Schoenberg knew the violin intimately and had played it since childhood. He once told Krasner 'I knew [the concerto] could be played because actually I was able to manage every note of it on the violin with my own hands'. Although its initial reputation for 'unplayability' has been dissipated by more recent scores of much greater difficulty, even today Schoenberg's concerto is seldom heard. Yet it is one of the richest creations in his later manner, a perfect marriage between twelve-note technique and expressive content.

Like the Suite in G, the Violin Concerto inherits certain characteristics from Schoenberg's idiosyncratic 'recomposition' of eighteenth-century

concertos. There, he had first built a whole work around the contrast of soloist and orchestra, in a tonal context: he now carried it over into his first large-scale twelve-note concerto (dedicated to his 'dear friend and fellow-warrior' Anton Webern, perhaps in response to Webern's own Concerto for nine instruments, composed in 1934 as a tribute for Schoenberg's sixtieth birthday). Schoenberg also took over from the 'recompositions' the idea of making the soloist carry the main thread of the argument with a virtuosity that is enormously demanding precisely because it must encompass the music's main substance, not decoration.

The reader may consult Ex. 10, in Chapter 6, for some of the Violin Concerto's principal themes, there used to illustrate the basics of the twelve-note method. Yet despite its advanced musical language the form of the Concerto is almost defiantly traditional. There are, too, significant echoes of traditional tonal procedures which might lead one to claim that the work as a whole exudes the aura of D minor, a common enough key for violin concertos. The first movement (*Poco Allegro*) has the proportions and thematic layout of a sonata form, which after the calm opening (Ex. 10c) soon assumes an impassioned and highly dramatic character. The orchestration is colourful and hard-edged, characterized by muted brass, percussion, much *pizzicato* and *col legno* string writing, and flutter-tongue woodwind. The violin, always the focus of attention, moves through ever-changing rhythmic, melodic and textural liaisons with various groups of instruments, and has a staggeringly difficult unaccompanied cadenza before the coda, which returns to the pensive mood of the opening.

The *Andante Grazioso* second movement, with its sweetly singing main theme (Ex. 10a), has a ternary form that alternates two characters: an intense yet almost pastoral lyricism in the outer sections, and a livelier *scherzando* mood. The texture has a pellucid transparency, the orchestra reduced to a handful of solo instruments for most of the time. The full-blooded *Allegro* finale is a species of sonata-rondo, with the general character of a brilliant and purposeful march. Fairly early on occurs a brief, dramatically prepared 'Quasi Cadenza', but the movement culminates in a huge accompanied cadenza proper—a cadenza of immense difficulty, which begins with a version of the work's opening theme (Ex. 10c) and takes in, during its course, the slow movement theme 10a as well. At length the full power of the orchestra crashes in on a great wave of sound

that combines the main themes of the first and last movements, while the violin sings out high above with thrilling effect (Ex. 25), after which the Concerto storms to a decisive conclusion.

Ex. 25

The musical score for Ex. 25 is presented in two staves. The top staff is for the Violin (Vln) and the bottom staff is for the Tutti (TUTTI). The Violin part begins with a series of eighth notes, marked with accents (>) and a forte (ff) dynamic. The Tutti part begins with a series of eighth notes, marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The Violin part then transitions to a solo section, marked 'Solo 8va' with a dashed line indicating an octave shift. The Tutti part continues with a series of eighth notes, marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic.

Schoenberg's next major work after the Violin Concerto was the Fourth String Quartet, similarly intense in character and large-boned, almost symphonic, in architecture. Then, with the Concerto and Quartet composed, he seems to have contemplated a third work of comparable dimensions and richness of language—nothing less than a four-movement Symphony. But like the early symphonic attempts of the 1900s and the Choral Symphony project of 1912–14, the symphony he began sketching in January and February 1937 remained only a series of fragments, tantalizing glimpses of a work that might have been. The sketches show the beginnings and conceptions of all four movements, a precise instrumentation, the twelve-tone row on which the work was to be based, and a strong hint of a programmatic basis. Describing the materials in 1959, Josef Rufer commented that this Symphony of 1937 'was obviously intended as a musical apologia for Judaism'. Schoenberg had briefly described the four movements thus: 1. 'Predominance (superiority) provokes envy'; 2. Scherzo '(a) What they think about us, (b) What we think about them, (c) conclusion'; 3. 'The sacred feasts and costumes'; 4. 'The day will come'.

Considering the Hebraic intonations of the slow movement of the Fourth Quartet, a 'Jewish Symphony' of the kind these sketches hint at was perhaps a logical next development. But they progressed no further.

Instead, Schoenberg's 'symphonic' impulses were diverted into different channels: first of all into his symphony-sized orchestration of Brahms's G minor Piano Quartet (described on p. 269), and then, in 1939, back to the Chamber Symphony No. 2 in E-flat minor which had lain unfinished and untouched since 1916. This time he was able to bring the work to a conclusion, thirty-three years since he had begun composing it.

The opportunity for this resolution was provided by a commission from the conductor Fritz Stiedry for his Orchestra of the New Friends of Music in New York. At first, Schoenberg made the interesting proposal that he arrange his Wind Quintet or the Op. 29 Suite for orchestra; but instead he settled on finishing the Chamber Symphony. Trying, as he explained, to discover after so long 'what did the author mean here?', he preserved the original formal outlines and material (which he still judged 'very good; expressive, characteristic, rich and interesting') as it had evolved in 1906–16. But he reworked many passages in detail, re-orchestrated the existing music, composed the coda of the first movement and the bulk of the second movement. He made some doubtful attempts at a third movement before deciding that the completed work, which he designated Op. 38, should remain in two. Yet by ending the second movement with a coda that recalls, amplifies, and deepens that of the first, he succeeded in producing a highly unified, impreguably self-sufficient design which made the proposed third movement unnecessary.

Despite the lengthy gestation, there is nothing patchy or inconsistent about the Chamber Symphony No. 2. Though generally cast aside by those who like to view Schoenberg's output as a series of historical milestones, it is one of his finest achievements: a work of unusual beauty, compelling urgency and great melodic distinction. As finally realized the title 'Chamber Symphony' is, of course, a misnomer: the orchestra is larger than for most Haydn or Mozart symphonies, and for all the delicacy of its instrumentation the piece has a truly symphonic largeness of line and gesture. The grave, melancholy flute melody with which the first movement opens is a case in point, and suggests that this Second Chamber Symphony may have been planned as a deliberate contrast of mood, pace and technique to the First: see Ex. 26. The First of course occupies a more crucial position in Schoenberg's development, and has been more generally admired on account of its individual harmonic language. But that of the

Second is no less individual, and perhaps subtler—closer to the Second String Quartet; though the freedom with which Schoenberg combines distantly related harmonies in triadic form doubtless reflects experience gained in twelve-note music.

Ex. 26

Adagio ♩ = 92

Solo Flute *p*

The slow first movement, characterized by flowing, expressive melodies such as Ex. 26, is a deeply felt elegy, with a somewhat nocturnal flavour that grows darker in the sudden shadows and tremulous half-lights of the coda. The large-scale second movement (*Con fuoco*) begins in a lighter, scherzo-like mood in G major, but soon blazes up in a torrential stream of continuous development that courses just as fiercely through the recapitulation and re-introduces themes from the first movement. Eventually darkness invades the music; the pace grinds to *molto adagio*, a solo horn sounds the opening phrase of Ex. 26 like a warning, and an

Ex. 27

Poco animato

Ob., Cl. *fp*

+Tpt I 8va lower *fp*

Vlns. *f* *mf*

Bsn., Hn. *ff*

Celli, Bassi *f*

Ex. 27 (continued)

The musical score for Ex. 27 (continued) is written for a large orchestra. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The music is in a key with three flats (E-flat major or C minor) and a 4/4 time signature. The score includes various dynamic markings: *ff* (fortissimo), *fff* (fortississimo), and *sf* (sforzando). Performance instructions include *allargando poco a poco* (rushing slowly) and *+ Picc. 8va* (piccolo, 8th octave). Instrumental parts are indicated by labels: *Strings*, *Tpts. & Hns con sord.* (trumpets and horns with mutes), *+ W. Wind* (woodwinds), *+ Bsns.* (bassoons), and *+ Bassi* (basses). The score shows a complex texture with many notes and rests, typical of Schoenberg's serial music.

extended epilogue—a dark, eloquent development and intensification of the coda of the first movement—begins (see Ex. 27).

Mounting to a climax of tragic fervour, the Symphony ends in the gloom of E flat minor. It is one of the very few Schoenberg works to have an explicitly tragic ending; but it is a tragedy with the inspiring effect of a *Lear* or *Hamlet*. Perhaps the long delay in the completion of the work was necessary for Schoenberg to tackle with sufficient objectivity the experience so powerfully embodied here.

In 1942 Schoenberg composed the magnificent Piano Concerto, Op. 42, premièred in 1944 by Eduard Steuermann under the baton of Leopold Stokowski. Like the *Ode to Napoleon*, Op. 41, this is a thoroughly twelve-note work which nevertheless has strong—one might almost say blatant—leanings towards traditional tonality. For all its serial ingenuity, it may be sensed as centring on the key of C (major/minor at the opening, clearly major at the end), but a C with a dark, disruptive F sharp region which exerts a strong influence on the course of events. There is a firm sense of harmonic movement—logical and inevitable, if not quite classical; moreover, the textures are more stable than in previous serial works, and Schoenberg allows much octave doubling in orchestra and piano. These factors plus some of the most whistleable tunes in twelve-note music (see Ex. 28) make the Piano Concerto one of the easiest of Schoenberg's major works to appreciate on a few hearings—its sound-world should affright no one who enjoys the concertos of, say, Bartók.

In this work Schoenberg returns to the kind of portmanteau single-movement form he had used in early pieces such as the First Chamber Symphony—and the concerto is, in fact, symphonic in layout. It divides into four interlinked sub-movements, and the solo piano's role, for all its taxing qualities, is basically an extended *obbligato* one, *primus inter pares* with the orchestra.

Schoenberg provided the outline of a 'programme' for the Piano Concerto (see p. 290) which suggests it may be a kind of musical autobiography. Certainly the placid, graceful, *ländler*-like theme which opens the work (Ex. 28a) has a distinctly Viennese flavour. The Concerto's first section is entirely built around this melody, which acts as *cantus* to various counterpoints of a similarly *gemütlich* cast. Suddenly the idyll is shattered by the irruption of a furious scherzo (*molto allegro*) which plunges the music into dark and desperate regions. This kind of musical psychological storm is not, of course, unusual in Schoenberg, but it has seldom if ever blown up from such a clear sky. As the tension heightens, the harmonic fabric begins to break into streams of ascending perfect fourths, bringing tonal movement to a standstill.

The ensuing third section, which functions as a slow movement, is a profound, reflective *Adagio*. New, long-spanned, tragically accented melodies intertwine with reminiscences of the scherzo; there is a short solo cadenza and an orchestral *tutti* of stark grandeur, ending in a minatory descent of perfect fourths in the brass. Another brief cadenza leads into the finale, *Giocoso*, in which peace and equilibrium are restored. Formally this section is a rondo, and its main theme (Ex. 28b) has a classic poise and wit. The struggles of the preceding sections are not forgotten—indeed, themes from the scherzo and adagio rear their heads again; but eventually the work's opening theme, Ex. 28a, returns, transformed into a defiant march, and a joyous *stretto* rushes the Concerto to a brusque but triumphant final cadence into C major, approached from F sharp (Ex. 28c—the final clinching chord telescopes the triad with its own leading-note). The sharp-eyed and -eared will notice that Ex. 28c is entirely built out of the opening phrases of Exx. 28a and b; and that these are, moreover, inversions of each other—which is just as things ought to be in twelve-note music!

There are no quibbles about 'tonality' in regard to the straightforward *Theme and Variations* in G minor, Op. 43. Composed in the summer of

1943, it was originally written for a forty-three piece wind band, with the 'pedagogic' purpose of enriching the amateur bandsman's repertoire with something more substantial than the staple fare of arrangements; and Schoenberg also made a transcription for full orchestra. Neither version is much played—inexplicably, for the work's tunefulness and clear-cut traditional layout make it a most enjoyable introduction to Schoenberg in general. From many other composers it would be hailed as a major work. In Schoenberg's output its place is not particularly exalted, but he weighed up its merits pretty precisely in a letter to Fritz Reiner:

Ex. 28

Andante ($\text{♩} = 44$)

(b) Giocoso (moderato) ($\text{♩} = 76$)

(c)

rit. *f* *Brass* *Piano* *Brass & Woodwind* *ff* *Piano* *Lento* *ff* *ff*

8va *8va*

Brns., Tbns.
Tuba

Detailed description: The image shows three musical excerpts. Excerpt (a) is a single melodic line in 3/8 time, marked 'Andante' with a quarter note equal to 44 beats. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Excerpt (b) is also a single melodic line in 3/8 time, marked '(b) Giocoso (moderato)' with a quarter note equal to 76 beats, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Excerpt (c) is a complex orchestral score for brass and woodwinds. It features multiple staves with various dynamics including *f* (forte), *ff* (fortissimo), and *piano*. It includes tempo markings like *rit.* (ritardando), *Lento* (slow), and *8va* (octave). The instrumentation includes Brass, Woodwind, Bsns. (Bassoons), Tbns. (Trombones), and Tuba.

It is not one of my principal works. . . . It is one of those works that one writes in order to enjoy one's own virtuosity and, in addition, to give a group of amateurs—in this case, wind bands—something better to play. I can assure you, and I think I can prove it—that as far as technique is concerned it is a masterpiece, and I believe it is also original, and I know it is also inspired. Not only because I cannot write even 10 bars without inspiration, but I really wrote the piece with great pleasure.⁴

Perhaps it is the obviousness of Schoenberg's pleasure that causes embarrassed commentators to look down their noses at the work. The unprejudiced listener is more likely to be captivated by its superb craftsmanship and sheer sense of fun. The awful solemnity of the Theme (Ex. 29a), whether intoned by a row of clarinets in the band version, or by solo trumpet in the orchestral one illustrated here, is beautifully undercut by the vigour and good humour of the following seven Variations and Finale. The work makes an interesting comparison with the Op. 31 Orchestral Variations—there are broad resemblances in structure, notably the expansive, multi-sectional finale, as well as many smaller similarities of technique. But whereas the earlier set more often treated its Theme in chorale-variation style, using it as a counterpoint to new subjects, in Op. 43 the main theme is always the focus of attention and we follow its metamorphosis and development in the time-honoured manner of Brahms's *Haydn Variations* or Elgar's *Enigma*. Variation 4, for instance, turns it into a waltz; in Variation 5 it becomes a sinuous cantilena which is also a canon by inversion (see Ex. 29b); and in Variation 6 a frisky fugue-subject.

The main subject carries its principal harmonies along with it throughout the work. As can be seen from its opening bars (Ex. 29a) these are unusually rich and sophisticated in their modulations; and at such moments as the climactic apotheosis of the Theme in the Finale, they undoubtedly help give the work its individual and oddly appealing flavour of rather schmaltzy grandeur.

Schoenberg's final, least-known orchestral work was the result of the somewhat bizarre scheme of the Hollywood arranger, conductor and publisher Nat Shilkret to 'put the Bible on records' to musical accompaniment. This grandiose project got no further than the *Genesis Suite*—

⁴Quoted in Rufer, op. cit., p. 72.

Ex. 29

Poco Allegro ($\text{♩} = 84$)

Tpt.
4/4
Tbn., later Horns
p
B.Cl., Bsn., Tuba
etc.

(b) Molto moderato ($\text{♩} = 82$)

p cantabile
Vlns.
Celli
p
f
etc.

six movements for speaker, chorus and orchestra, contributed by six leading contemporary composers, financed and commissioned by Shilkret, who wrote a seventh movement himself. It was premièred in November 1945 and then quickly forgotten. Only two component numbers have maintained a precarious concert existence since then—Stravinsky's *Babel*, and the textless *Prelude*, Op. 44, which Schoenberg contributed to open the cycle.

Though short (some five minutes' duration) and difficult to mount, requiring a wordless chorus in addition to a large orchestra, the *Genesis Prelude* ranks high in Schoenberg's *œuvre* for its richness of thought and substance. Indeed it initiates the final period in his music that is typified by the high-pressure expressiveness of the String Trio he was to write the following year. Evidently he conceived of the Creation as the realization of an already latent order in the universe. The opening section of the *Prelude* is free in form, but the 'latent order' lies in its twelve-note organization. The very beginning presents the note-row in an ascending

Ex. 30

The musical score for Ex. 30 is presented in three systems. The first system is in bass clef with a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of two flats. It begins with a *ppp* dynamic marking. The notation includes various chords and single notes, with measure numbers 1 through 11 indicated above the staff. Instrument annotations include 'Tbns. Cb, sul pont Gong' (Measures 1-3), 'Tuba' (Measure 4), 'Cb, o (harm)' (Measures 7-8), 'Celli harmonics +2 Fl' (Measure 9), and 'Solo Vln' (Measures 9-11). The second system is in treble clef, starting with a 'C.A.' (Crescendo Allargando) marking and a 'Bsn.' (Bassoon) annotation. The third system continues the treble staff with an 'etc.' marking at the end.

line, orchestrated over six octaves so that it enacts a rise out of primeval murk (low tuba) into light (solo violin) (Ex. 30a). Hesitant, rhythmically uncertain, various thematic shapes appear, seeming to press forward towards some more definite form. And eventually the music emerges into a clearly articulated structure—a fugue with a double subject (Ex. 30b). The bulk of the *Prelude* is occupied with the working-out of the fugue in masterly counterpoint that embodies the full range of traditional and twelve-note devices. Towards the end the orchestra is joined by a wordless chorus, which in the final bars soars up to a conclusion with a strongly tonal feeling—the voices hold clear, triumphant octave Cs, dying away until only a solo singer can be heard. Creation has been accomplished in a mere five minutes: we have arrived at the voice of the individual human being.



Chamber Music

SCHOENBERG BEGAN LEARNING THE VIOLIN AT THE AGE OF EIGHT, and throughout his youth his most important experience of practical music-making was in playing chamber music with friends such as Oskar Adler. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that some of his earliest compositional efforts were in this field; and he continued to devote a major part of his creative energies to the medium throughout his life. We need hardly be detained by the two-violin polkas and marches, the little trios and so on that form the earliest stratum of his musical legacy: they are the necessary juvenilia of a nascent compositional gift. Nor is the tiny *Stück* in D minor for violin and piano of the earliest 1890s—a charmingly Slavonic miniature in the manner of a Dvorák *Humoresque*—evidence of any unusual talent. Yet the choice of key, which is that of the even earlier *Romance* for two violins and viola, has some small significance: throughout all the vast developments of his musical language, Schoenberg would be a ‘D-minorish’ composer to the end of his days.

During the 1890s the budding composer wrote several string quartets, and at least one composition for voice and quartet (discussed on p. 236). Only the last of these early string quartets, the D major Quartet of 1897, has survived entire. Pre-dating it by perhaps two or three years is a *Presto* in C major, clearly the finale of one of the lost quartets—possibly the quartet whose slow movement was played to Josef Labor. Compared to much of Schoenberg’s later work this *Presto* is an insignificant item, but as the earliest surviving chamber piece by him of any size—indeed, his

earliest handling of a species of sonata form that we possess (it is a sonata-rondo)—it is a legitimate object of interest. Even at the age of nineteen or twenty, Schoenberg scores much more confidently and idiomatically for strings than for piano. The idiom owes much to Brahms and Schubert, and something too perhaps to Dvořák; it is in fact an ambitious, tuneful, genial movement, written with obvious zest and a confident handling of text-book structure, fluent in its transitions and finding many ways to vary its 4/4 rhythms through rests, suspensions, and syncopation. Particularly noteworthy is Schoenberg's readiness either to vary the presentation of the themes themselves, or to add new elements to their accompaniment or harmonization at each appearance. Here, perhaps, are the first modest seeds of his concept of 'continuous development', though in this case carried out with such clarity and simplicity that no listener could fail to recognize the basic ideas.

There is another free-standing quartet movement, a Scherzo and Trio in F major dating from 1897. In fact this was the original second movement of the D major String Quartet, which Schoenberg discarded on Zemlinsky's advice and replaced with an Intermezzo in F-sharp minor. Like the Intermezzo, the Scherzo begins with its main theme on the viola, but there the resemblances end. Less immediately attractive than the *Presto*, the Scherzo is a rather dogged, hard-driven movement, notable for the fairly ambitious scale of its developments. Even the more plaintive Trio continues to develop aspects of the main Scherzo theme. It may well be that Zemlinsky thought this reasonably complex and demanding movement was inappropriate to follow the already quite ambitious first movement of the D major Quartet, whereas the lighter, more gossamer-textured Intermezzo fulfils this function admirably. Had the original second movement been allowed to stand, the Quartet would have been a darker, less emotionally balanced composition.

Turning now to the D major Quartet itself, it seems highly appropriate that this work first brought Schoenberg's name before the Viennese public. Within its obvious stylistic limitations it is an impressive and likeable work, fairly brimming with talent, though listeners may at first distinguish the influence of the young composer's senior contemporaries more easily than the authentic voice of Schoenberg. Brahms—especially in the two central movements, the aforementioned Intermezzo, and a Theme with Variations—is only to be expected. The way the viola takes

the lead in the Intermezzo against a lightly scored accompaniment is a transparent homage to the *Agitato* movement of Brahms's B-flat Quartet, Op. 67. (Schoenberg increases the veiled quality of sonority by having the accompanying instruments muted.) Dvořák and Smetana, unmistakable in the outer movements, are perhaps more surprising influences, though it is clear even from Schoenberg's juvenilia that he was well aware of them; but their impress is found in Zemlinsky's chamber works of the 1890s also. The Czech master's string quartets were, unlike Brahms's, among the most vital contributions to the genre in the later nineteenth century, and Schoenberg may well have found them the most fruitful contemporary examples from which to learn his trade. Certainly he is much indebted to them for the freshness and spontaneity of the tunes; and if the naïvety of the finale's main theme reminds us of Dvořák at his most rustic, it is none the worse for that. Apart from a few original touches (such as the muted *am steg* sonorities of the Intermezzo) and some prophetic turns of phrase and harmony, it is in the general melodic richness and contrapuntal dexterity that we sense the real Schoenberg. Altogether this is an immensely likeable work, clear in structure and memorable in invention. No sign remains of the considerable pains it cost its composer, through more than one stage of revision. Its ebullience, its romantic introspection, and its hints of sensitive depths perhaps paint a truer picture of the young Schoenberg than any memoir viewing him from outside. His debut on the Viennese musical scene was full of promise.

Two years later, with *Verklärte Nacht*, the promise is being amply fulfilled. On one level this single-movement string sextet is a symphonic poem after a sentimental but quite atmospheric poem from Richard Dehmel's *Weib und Welt*. Two lovers wander among the trees on a cold moonlit night. She confesses she is pregnant, not by him, but by an earlier lover whom she took because—until now—she had believed that having a child would bring meaning, if not happiness, to her life. He, inspired to calm confidence by the beauty of the moonlit world, assures her that the love they have now found together will unite them and make the child their own; they embrace, and walk on 'through the high, bright night'. The layout of Dehmel's poem—in five sections, the woman's outburst and the man's reply framed by passages illustrating their walk in the moonlight—gives the basic form of Schoenberg's sextet, and every phrase is most sensitively illustrated in the music, from the dragging steps

at the opening to the wonderfully radiant evocation of the 'transfigured night' at the close.

Yet on another level the music makes so much sense in its own terms that one hardly feels the programme to be a vital element in its structural logic, however it may have affected the initial inspiration. Maybe Schoenberg felt that the programme helped an audience to grasp a work of such ambitious scope: a half-hour symphonic movement for string instruments alone, highly emotional in expression, structurally elusive in its constant development of ever-metamorphosing thematic shapes, and above all *polyphonic* in a degree to which his hearers were quite unused.

Schoenberg's success in fulfilling this large design indicates how rapid had been his progress towards musical mastery in a mere two years. Several outside influences are still prominent—Wagner certainly, Brahms certainly, Hugo Wolf probably, Richard Strauss perhaps—but the work is thoroughly Schoenbergian; the counterpoint has his characteristic boldness and clarity however great its elaboration, and the melodies have his distinctive plasticity. The handling of tonality over a large span is already masterly. The work's key-centre is D, minor in the first half, major in the second. But it is often quitted for remote areas; and decisive returns to D, often suggested, are almost as often suspensefully delayed. This makes the almost sententiously firm D major of the opening of the fourth section (the Man's reply) especially striking, and creates the work's main structural division, initiating a 'second movement' complementary to the first. The nocturnal loveliness of the D major ending, too, is all the more satisfying for being so long and so artfully postponed. Equally impressive, on a smaller scale, is the moment-to-moment ebb and flow of harmonic tensions from straightforward diatonicism to an already intense chromaticism, so that these opposing elements are kept in a living (because precarious) balance, melting into one another without incongruity. Ex. 31 is a good illustration—the relaxation from the very last climax (*Verklärte Nacht* does indeed, in Egon Wellesz's phrase, suffer from 'an excess of climax', but with music of such youthful ardour it is an easily forgivable fault) towards the start of the tranquil coda.

The chord at (x), incidentally, is the 'single uncatalogued dissonance' for which the work was rejected in 1899. But once it reached performance *Verklärte Nacht* was not long in being accepted into the repertoire, and it remains to this day the most popular example—and no ignoble one

Ex. 31

Sehr gross

Vlns. Vla.II
Vla.I
4/4
Celli
sf
Vlns. Vla.I
(X)
dim
Vla.II
Celli
sf
pp
etc

either, if hardly typical—of Schoenberg's work. It is, however, most often heard in either of the later versions he made for full string orchestra, where the greater richness of tone is certainly an advantage, though not a decisive one, over the string sextet original.

Schoenberg's 'official' String Quartet No. 1, Op. 7 in D minor, dates from five years later.¹ It sets out to be a masterpiece from the first bar, with a grimly determined, heaven-storming opening theme:

Ex. 32

Nicht zu rasch

mf

¹ When he began it he abandoned work on a previous quartet in the same key, of which only fragments survive.

It very nearly succeeds—certainly much of it is greater music than any he had written before. In this crucial work of his first period, he tackled the problem of writing a piece on the largest scale that dispensed with the prop of a text (as in the *Gurrelieder*) or implied literary programme (as in *Pelleas und Melisande*).² In so doing, he was undoubtedly inspired not only by the large-scale forms of Wagner (who, with Brahms, profoundly influences the Quartet's language) but by those of Beethoven—not just the Beethoven of the late quartets, but of the *Eroica* symphony, a work Schoenberg acknowledged as his conscious model. The result is forty-five minutes' 'pure' music of the most highly wrought and concentrated kind—probably the largest continuous movement for string quartet that had ever been written. It is a single gigantic sonata-form, which (like *Pelleas*) expands to accommodate the semblance of a four-movement structure. A scherzo interposes between the two halves of the development section, and a 'slow movement' before the recapitulation—which, in turn, is cast in the form of a rondo with a slow, epilogue-like coda, and in true Schoenbergian style continues the developmental process (of the scherzo and slow movement themes as well as the others).

That is the large-scale design. On the smaller scale the music is incredibly intricate. It has often been said, with justice, that almost every note is thematic: there is no filling-in anywhere, and the texture is usually highly contrapuntal, each instrument having something important to say—often something different from what the others are saying at the same time. The work is very rich in melody and the expressive contrasts necessary to sustain such a large conception—indeed, it packs in the widest range of style and mood that Schoenberg had so far attempted. Many aspects of it are forward-looking. The freedom of the polyphony, especially in the vast initial exposition and development, combines in places with the chromatic characteristics of certain themes to produce abrasive, linearly determined harmonies that are already close to the world of the total-chromatic works. Schoenberg also introduces a whole range of

² But there was still a semblance of a programme, a personal one; and although he declined to reveal it he did not mind admitting its existence in later life, even telling his students 'that some of the extravagances of form were because the piece was really a sort of "symphonic poem"' and to Dika Newlin that he had 'written his own life in music' in this Quartet. See *Schoenberg Remembered*, pp. 193 and 286.

string sounds which, though they had been used in orchestral contexts, were still new to chamber music—widespread use of harmonics, *col legno* tapping of the strings with the wood of the bow, *sul ponticello tremolandi*, contrasts between muted and unmuted playing.

It goes without saying that it is a very difficult work to play; and, in all but the best performances, an exhausting one to listen to. The explosive passion and intellectual force, daunting enough in themselves, are allied in the earlier parts of the Quartet to a certain hectoring earnestness which can seem intimidating. Schoenberg himself commented near the end of his life that he had, perhaps, demanded too much of the listener's stamina.

Nevertheless, the work presents a challenge to performers—to articulate its massive structures while bringing out the interplay of its many moods—which assures it a special place in the repertoire. For there is no lack of contrast, and many welcome moments of comparative relaxation and direct melodic appeal. One might instance how, in the first development section, a kind of hurdy-gurdy rhythm invades the music, and we hear what might almost be a snatch of some tearful Viennese street-ballad:

Ex. 33

The musical score for Ex. 33 is written for Violin I and Viola (Vln. I, Vla.), Violin II (Vln. II), and Cello. The time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood is marked *ff sehr ausdrucksvoll*. The score shows a single measure of music. The Cello part has a steady eighth-note pulse. The Violin I and Viola part has a more complex, syncopated melody. The Violin II part has a steady eighth-note pulse. The measure ends with a double bar line.

Or there is the forthright, vaunting theme of the scherzo; or, most celebrated of all, the lovely E major viola melody from the slow movement: see Ex. 34. The latter half of the work is perhaps more approachable than the opening sections: the rate of development is not so feverish, and the harmony appears to have had the corners rubbed off it in

Ex. 34



the previous struggles—it is more familiarly tonal. This is most true of the warm, long-drawn-out epilogue in D major, where all the work's conflicts attain a resolution of untroubled calm; and where Schoenberg, with his four string instruments, closes in a romantic lushness that rivals Richard Strauss.

A few weeks after completing the Quartet, in October 1905, Schoenberg began, but did not finish, another chamber work after a Dehmel poem: *Ein Stelldichein* (A trysting-place) for oboe, clarinet, violin, cello and piano. The poem, like that which provided the inspiration for *Verklärte Nacht*, comes from the first edition of Dehmel's *Weib und Welt*, though the poet later withdrew it. Even more than 'Verklärte Nacht', Dehmel's 'Ein Stelldichein' is a presentation of a guilty psychological state, similar to that of the protagonist of Schoenberg's *Erwartung*; the narrator's death-wish, and the imagery of a poisoned garden, also anticipates *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*. The music is striking enough for us to regret its non-completion. A serene, nocturnal prelude in a much-expanded E-flat exists in fair copy; and a continuation—some three minutes of a turbulent *allegro* in E-flat minor—survives in a sketchbook and can be played.³ Its hectic contrapuntal vigour is comparable to the opening moments of the First String Quartet, with some whole-tone inflections that anticipate the First Chamber Symphony.

For dramatic convenience I have briefly described the String Quartet No. 2, Op. 10, at the beginning of Chapter 1. Here I would only point

³ The forty-five bars of fast music, marked *Sehr rasch, heftig*, were put into performable shape by Friedrich Cerha. Ensembles seem more often to perform the ninety-bar preludial section on its own, but the work was published in score in 1980, with Cerha's performing version edited by Rudolf Stephan.

to some structural features. Compared to the form of the First Quartet the Second seems highly conservative. This reflects an obvious desire on Schoenberg's part to make its expressive idea—so intimately bound up with its exploration of new harmonic resources—as comprehensible as possible. Gone is the vast, taxing, forty-minute movement. Instead, we find the familiar four separate movements of a classical quartet, taking some twenty-eight minutes to perform; the counterpoint as masterly as ever, but not quite so involved; the textures transparent, the points of structural division obvious, the development and derivation of the themes made clear.⁴ The first movement is a concise sonata form (hardly longer to play than the First Quartet's exposition) with the order of its main themes altered in the recapitulation. The second falls clearly into the pattern of scherzo (with three contrasting themes) and trio, with 'Ach, du lieber Augustin' carrying familiarity to the point of grotesque in the transition back to the scherzo.

With the third movement we find what seems an enormous innovation—the addition of a soprano singer. But the song, 'Litany', is cast as a tightly organized set of variations, so tight that every single figure relates to the main theme, while that theme itself is built of four already familiar figures, three from the first movement, the other from the scherzo. And at least one reason for the sung text, surely, is that it may act as an explanation, make quite explicit the kind of emotional experience implied by the music. Likewise the finale, 'Entrückung', is not just a song-setting, but a musical enactment provided with a verbal correlative. Even here, after the free-chromatic introduction evoking the 'air from other planets', Schoenberg gives the movement the layout and proportions of a sonata-form, and adds a peaceful, transfigured instrumental epilogue that puts us back on purely musical ground and closes the tonal circle in a quiet but fulfilled F-sharp major. This reversion to comparatively simple, traditional structures created an important precedent: when Schoenberg came to write twelve-note works he first of all preferred to cast them, too, in classical moulds—not just because he loved the forms, but because they were positive aids to comprehensibility, and helped him to stress the continuity of tradition in his music.

⁴These points also apply to the Second Chamber Symphony, which Schoenberg had laid aside to work on the Second Quartet.

I suggested in Chapter 1 that if the Second Quartet is the preface to the great upheaval of 1908–9, *Pierrot Lunaire*, Op. 21 is its ironic epilogue. ‘Light, ironic, satirical’ was the tone in which *Pierrot* was conceived, according to Schoenberg himself; and even if that tone is not maintained throughout, it is better to keep it in mind than to wax over-serious about this strangest and most notorious of his compositions. Elements of the Expressionist nightmare do indeed gain entrance, but the deliberate mannerism of the music’s highly sculptured forms helps distance and undercut them (as does the simple, rigid structure of Guiraud’s texts). The self-absorbed artist is satirized in the guise of Pierrot, the *commedia dell’arte* clown turned morbid aesthete, while Schoenberg’s choice of ensemble invokes fleeting resemblances to a kind of surrealist cabaret act. There are five players handling eight instruments (flute and piccolo; clarinet and bass clarinet; violin and viola; cello; piano) and each of the twenty-one numbers uses a different combination of them—the full eight appear only in the very last. While the instrumentalists convey the musical substance, the poems—and much of the work’s disturbing effect—are delivered by a female reciter employing the device known as *Sprechstimme* (‘speech-song’).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century several composers had sought to control the interaction of a speaking voice with a musical accompaniment, not only rhythmically but in terms of pitch—as Schoenberg himself did in the monodrama of the *Gurrelieder*. In *Pierrot*, however, he went further, writing a melodic line for vocal declamation in which the speaking voice must momentarily touch the indicated pitch, then rise or fall away from it in a *glissando*—it should resemble neither song nor a sing-song manner of speaking. The precise interpretation of Schoenberg’s instructions has often been found difficult: they imply *relative* pitch, a free voice-line, yet he notates *exact* pitches, and at certain points exact pitches are indeed necessary for motivic interplay with the ensemble. Nevertheless, many artists have attempted the work with a fair degree of success—there is no sign of this problem driving it out of the repertoire, where it remains more firmly entrenched than most other Schoenberg works.

Pierrot is divided into three parts of seven numbers each. Part I is nearest to the ‘light, ironic, satirical’ ideal: a series of character portraits

and nocturnes in which—as throughout the cycle—the moon is a silent, omnipresent influence. In Part II the nightmare takes over, with the vision of giant moths, blotting out the sun with their wings, and proceeds to explore images of violence, guilt and retribution. In Part III it gradually ebbs away again, and a nostalgia enters verses and music: Pierrot travels home to Bergamo, and the poet, liberated, awakes to ‘the ancient scent of far-off days’. The various numbers sum up in microcosm the experience of the earlier total-chromatic works. The fixed form of Guiraud’s thirteen-line rondels (in which lines 1 and 2 recur as 7 and 8, and 1 again as 13) bestows brevity, and often induces elements of musical recapitulation as well. Many other number-games and numerological symbolisms can be discerned in the individual movements, used in an almost Bachian fashion. But the forms are free for the most part—No. 13, ‘Enthauptung’ (Beheading) is, indeed, an example of a freely evolving form like Op. 11 No. 3 or Op. 16 No. 5. The strict organization of the passacaglia ‘Nacht’ (No. 8), the three-part invention of ‘Madonna’ (No. 6), clearly indebted to the study of Bach, or the contrapuntal miracle ‘Der Mondfleck’ (No. 18), though indicative of future developments, is the exception rather than the rule. The cycle presents, rather, a series of fantastic or lyrical musical images—the sweet and skittish violin solo of ‘Columbine’ (No. 2); the pale, stylized waltz of ‘Valse de Chopin’ (No. 5); ‘Der kranke Mond’ (The Sick Moon), in which the reciter is accompanied only by a mournful solo flute (No. 7); the extreme emotionality of ‘Die Kreuze’ (The Crosses, No. 14); ‘Serenade’ (No. 19) with its superb and virtuosic cello solo (see Ex. 35); the gentle barcarolle of ‘Heimfahrt’ (Homeward Journey), and the infinitely tender awakening, with its hint of tonality regained, of the concluding ‘O alter Duft’.

The *Serenade*, Op. 24 is, as its title suggests, one of Schoenberg’s most relaxed and ingratiating scores. Léos Janáček, hearing it at an I.S.C.M. festival, described it as a piece of ‘Viennese strumming’. It was begun in 1920, but the bulk of the music dates from 1923. It thus spans the final stages of the period of searching that led to the adoption of the twelve-note method, and the music’s warmth and gaiety surely bear witness to a certain relief and return of confidence as the way ahead began to seem clear and certain. The work is in seven characterful movements, of which several use various kinds of serial technique, for the most part

Ex. 35

Cello

Reciter

Knipst er trüb ein piz - zi - ca - to

Piano

immer p

rit. *p* *ad lib.* *langsam — accel.* *rit.* *f*

pp *pp* *f*

unobtrusively. The ensemble consists of seven instruments—clarinet, bass clarinet, mandolin, guitar and string trio—with the addition of a bass or baritone soloist in the fourth movement. The sound-world recalls not only the more clownish moments of *Pierrot Lunaire*, but also the near-contemporary chamber works of other composers—notably Stravinsky's *Ragtime* and *The Soldier's Tale*—and some commentators have claimed to detect a jazz influence; but to this hearer at least, the confection is entirely and engagingly Austrian.

The first movement is a jaunty march in a telescoped sonata-form, the lead most often being taken by the clarinets while mandoline, guitar and strings add pattering or *pizzicato* rhythmic figures that seem to tumble over each other with enthusiasm. There follows a gracefully poised minuet and less well-mannered trio with a viola solo whose acerbities recall the 'Serenade' movement of *Pierrot Lunaire*. The third movement is a set of five variations and coda on a ruminative theme (of eleven bars length, using eleven tones of the chromatic scale arranged in a fourteen-note series) announced by unaccompanied clarinet in its lowest register. Though the variations preserve the proportions of the parent theme, they are notable for their rhythmic flexibility and textural inventiveness.

The only strictly twelve-note movement is the fourth, a vehement setting of Petrarch's Sonnet No. 217 ('If I could take revenge on her'). The method is somewhat primitively applied, as the voice part consists of thirteen rotations of the original untransposed row, while the ensemble derives accompanimental figures more freely from the same source. It requires extremely sensitive singing to avoid the impression that it inhabits a lower level of inspiration than the other movements. The work's most expansive section follows—the delightful 'Dance-Scene', whose design is enlarged (as in some other movements) by the use of formal repeats. Two principal dance-characters are alternated—a lively, capricious waltz and a delicately soulful Austrian *ländler*, complete with Mahlerian cuckoo-calls in the tune:

Ex. 36



The sixth movement is a Song without Words, a hushed twenty-six bar miniature of rapt beauty, through whose muted textures a wide-spanned melody gracefully arches its way. Then the seventh movement, a pot-pourri using the first movement's march as a basis and 'recessional', passes themes from the other movements in affectionate review (with the

Ländler Ex. 36 much in evidence) and brings the work to an end in high good humour.

If the *Serenade* is one of Schoenberg's most likeable works, his next chamber composition, the *Wind Quintet* (1923–4), is initially one of the most forbidding. It is the first really large-scale twelve-note work, and the first piece since the *Second Quartet* in which he felt himself able to return fully to the classical forms of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century masters which meant so much to him. He celebrates the return with an extended display of compositional virtuosity which to many listeners makes the *Quintet* one of his most 'abstract' pieces. Its dedication, to his newly born grandson, 'Dem Bubi Arnold' indicates that Schoenberg conceived the work as something of a divertimento, but the result is far more weighty than most which receive that designation. *Wind Quintets* tend, on the whole, to be shorter than chamber works for strings, for simple reasons of breath-control and audience stamina. Schoenberg's is over forty minutes long, in four big movements, and is extremely difficult to play. It follows that really well-rehearsed, affectionate, ingratiating performances are rare—and anything below a very high standard of playing tends to become an assault on the ear.

Moreover, this is one of the few cases where the harmonic aspect of the music seems to be almost entirely subordinated to the thematic, polyphonic employment of the twelve-note method. I say 'seems' because it would in fact be very difficult to prove, and the work does actually suggest an overall key-centre—a good one for wind instruments, E-flat. But in the nature of things a quintet of flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon does not blend with anything like the smoothness of a string quartet: the ear is bound to pick out the individual lines in any chord, as much as the homogenous entity. The music, then, is as intensely contrapuntal as most other Schoenberg, but the medium magnifies our awareness of the fact while diminishing our perception of the harmonic sense which holds the intertwining lines in balance. In addition, to an extent rare in Schoenberg, the music does not often present explicit melodies; rather, various kinds of polyphonic texture.

It is, in sum, a fascinating work (and in the rare first-rate performance a most enjoyable one), full of contrasts of colour and mood, but one feels he had not yet assimilated the twelve-note method into his natural style

as perfectly as he may have believed. The first movement (*Schwungvoll*) has the proportions of a broad, reflective, sonata-form. The second is a good-natured, rather heavy-footed scherzo with a livelier trio, and the calm slow movement (*Etwas langsam*) is in ternary song-form. The most immediately appealing movement is undoubtedly the rondo-finale, not least because its perky main theme (announced at the outset by clarinet) gives a more clearly melodic and rhythmic basis to the music and is easily recognizable at each return. At the very end of the work, too, Schoenberg suddenly relaxes the apparent harmonic saturation: he liquidates the twelve-note row into the chains of ascending and descending fourths of which he was so fond, and achieves thereby a beautifully terse, biting final cadence into E-flat (Ex. 37).

Ex. 37

The musical score for Ex. 37 consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a top staff with parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Oboe (Ob.), and Horn (Hr.) and a bottom staff for Bassoon (Bsn.). The time signature is 2/4. The first staff is marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system has a top staff with parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), and Horn (Hr.) and a bottom staff for Bassoon (Bsn.). The second staff is marked with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The music features a series of ascending and descending fourths, characteristic of Schoenberg's style.

The Suite for seven instruments, Op. 29, raises some of the problems demonstrated by the Wind Quintet in an even more acute form. It is one of Schoenberg's wittiest and warmest-hearted works: but an inadequate performance infallibly turns it into an arid, sour-toned endurance test.

Partly it is a question of the ensemble. The combination of E-flat clarinet, B-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, piano and string trio can easily be a hard, unblending one. The technical difficulties are as uncompromising as ever, and there is an added stylistic problem. The work is dominated by dance-rhythms of various kinds, but Schoenberg tends to play the music off *against* these rhythms by highly sophisticated shifts of accent, cross-rhythms, sprung rhythms, syncopation, and off-beat entries. When the players are able to sense and convey this tension and interplay between the apparent and actual pulse, it adds tremendous rhythmic life to the music. But if they are just occupied in counting the beats (which fly by very quickly!) and in playing their own notes, then scramble and confusion can ensue.⁵ The work usually requires a conductor.

The work, composed between 1924 and 1926, was a kind of wedding present for Schoenberg's second wife, Gertrud. He originally planned a seven-movement, *Serenade*-like piece, including a waltz and a foxtrot; but in the event the Suite comprised four large-scale, highly developed movements of a pronounced dance-character. As in the Quintet, a key-centre of E-flat is discernible; the construction of the twelve-note row enabled him to begin and end each movement with figures including the notes G and E-flat (S) for 'Gertrud Schoenberg'. The 'classical' sounds of thirds and sixths are derived directly from the row's salient intervallic properties. The row had more valuable constructional characteristics, however: it is here that Schoenberg's practice of combining different, related row-forms really begins in earnest.

The first movement, 'Ouverture', is a bright and vigorous piece: it resembles a sonata-form with a big ternary exposition, but the 'drunken waltz' (see Ex. 11*b* in Chapter 6) takes the place of the development proper and returns after the recapitulation (which has been thoroughly developmental) in the coda. The next movement, 'Tanzschritte' (Dance-steps) is a fiery, rather sardonic character-piece, resembling if anything a highly stylized polka. The pace is fast and furious for the most part, but the coda is quieter, more reflective. The third movement, a Theme with Variations, is usually treated as a 'curiosity' of twelve-note music, instead of the straightforward piece of splendid music-making it is. The theme is

⁵ My impression is that performances of the latter kind are much rarer than they used to be. But performances of any kind remain rarer than this wonderful work deserves.

a perfectly tonal one in E major: a Schoenbergian adaptation of a tune well known in Germany as ‘Ännchen von Tharau’—no folksong, as is sometimes stated, but the work of the composer Friedrich Silcher (1789–1860). Schoenberg presents it on bass clarinet, which picks out the requisite notes from the piano’s chattering twelve-note accompaniment. The four variations never stray far from the source-melody, but are strongly contrasted: and the third, with its dreamy high clarinet line, crystalline piano figuration, violin harmonics and *col legno* pattering from the other strings, is music of ethereal beauty. The finale is a Gigue with elements of a fugue and the proportions of a sonata-form. Here Schoenberg’s rhythmic dislocations are at their most developed, and the movement is either invigorating or messy depending on the performance. There is a beautifully delicate reminiscence of the above-mentioned third variation (with elements of the first movement intermingled) before the agile coda, which concludes with a reference to the Suite’s very opening.

Schoenberg’s next work, the Third String Quartet, Op. 30 (1927), is one of the most poised and serene he ever wrote, ‘classical’ in spirit as well as in form. If less colourful and dramatic than the other quartets, the Third gains a special place in the listener’s affections through its positive, optimistic character, its lucidity of thought, its unfailing melodiousness and lyric grace. And again a ‘tonal centre’—of C—is discernible. It is much less simple a work than it first seems, but its emotional complexities are hinted at, not directly stated.

There are four movements. Schoenberg regarded the first (*Moderato*) as unorthodox in layout, though there are few obstacles to regarding it as a beautifully proportioned sonata form. Doubtless the composer was thinking of the running quaver motion, presented at the very outset in an eight-note *ostinato* pattern in second violin and viola, which—though it assumes many guises—courses through almost every bar of the movement, and against which the graceful, long-breathed melodies we think of as first and second subjects are continually played off. In fact, it is exactly this quaver motion which gives the movement its ‘classical’ sense of athletic, uninterrupted flow, and welds it into a satisfying whole.

The *Adagio* second movement is a blend of rondo and variations. Two calmly expressive themes alternate, but are much transformed at each appearance. The second has a characteristic *staccato* accompaniment, which as the movement proceeds brings to mind a suggestion of distant

marching. The third movement is labelled an Intermezzo, but is a straightforward scherzo and trio, the scherzo's elegant opening theme preserving something of the character of a minuet. The finale is a spirited sonata-rondo, with the same sense of 'classical' momentum as the first movement: a vigorous main theme alternates with a smoothly lyrical cantilena in which the cello is prominent in its high register, and a more rhythmic episode that may recall the march-like music of the *Adagio*. In the coda, Schoenberg dissolves this brilliant and charming Quartet into a final, ambling *ostinato*.

The Third Quartet was commissioned by the great American patroness of chamber music, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge (who also provided the proximate cause of some of the finest works of Bartók, Frank Bridge, Hindemith, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, and Webern, among others). In 1936, when Schoenberg was living in the United States, she repeated her commission. The result was the String Quartet No. 4, Op. 37—a work of rare mastery, rich in substance and magnificent in its craftsmanship. Again we find the traditional four-movement layout, but the scale is larger than in the Third Quartet. The range of expression, too, is much wider—this is a dramatic work, full of contrasts of character and pace, often tough and hard-bitten in sound, but holding its component parts in a dynamic equilibrium that prepares the way for a sanely optimistic finale without unnecessary heroics. In character it most resembles the Violin Concerto on which Schoenberg was engaged at the same period. To largeness of gesture is allied more far-reaching use of string harmonics, *col legno* playing and other effects, which had been almost entirely eschewed in No. 3.

The first movement (*Allegro molto, energico*) can be likened to a sonata-form, though Schoenberg did not emphasize this aspect.⁶ Certainly there are two contrasting thematic groups, but in retrospect the movement seems dominated by the downright utterance of the theme announced at the very outset (Ex. 38a). This powers the argument with passionate force, and the whole movement has an irresistible momentum which is, nevertheless, very different from the easy onward-spinning motion of the Third Quartet. The music is much more strenuous and

⁶ But see above, p. 153, for J. Peter Burkholder's analysis of the movement as a modified sonata design.

volatile, as would befit a work in Schoenberg's favourite D minor—and indeed D seems to be the suggested key-centre, Ex. 38a as in many other passages.

The second movement (*Comodo*) is an intermezzo—a large-scale, dance-like piece in 3/4 with a somewhat faster trio in 2/2. Lighter moods predominate here, but they are subtle, not superficial ones. The outer sections might be a minuet or *Ländler*, but their soft-stepping rhythms convey no hint of nostalgia—rather a tense, alert vitality to which the use of harmonics and *sul ponticello* playing adds a touch of the light fantastic. The *Largo* slow movement begins with a tragic, declamatory theme for all four instruments in unison (Ex. 38b—it uses a transposition of the original row as found in Ex. 38a): its improvisatory, chant-like nature might just possibly be the sublimation of some memory of Hebrew cantillation.

Ex. 38a

(a) *Allegro molto, energico*

Ex. 38b

(b)

Largo ♩ = 78

poco accel. — — — *a tempo*

This introduces a bipartite movement in whose first half the first violin more than once attempts a florid, impassioned cadenza in the spirit of

Ex. 38*b*. That theme returns, inverted, to announce the second half, which begins with a thoughtful fugato and gradually binds rebellious elements into a threnodic but calmer unity.

The finale (*Allegro*) contrasts two principal ideas, characterized by their respective markings *amabile* and *agitato*. Both are march-like, and for all its resemblances to sonata-rondo the movement might best be described as an extended march (a feature of several Schoenberg works of the period, cf. the Violin Concerto, *Kol Nidre* and the Piano Concerto). Passing through many vicissitudes in a particularly eventful and wide-ranging development, the movement strives for and eventually attains a mood of quiet confidence which the gentle *calando* coda confirms.

The *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, Op. 41 of 1942, is a setting for string quartet, piano and reciter of a poem by Lord Byron whose 171 lines are a *tour-de-force* of unbridled sarcasm, kindled by disgust at Napoleon's capitulation in 1814. The parallel with Hitler in 1942 (still very much in command in Germany) was hardly exact, but doubtless Schoenberg saw in Byron's text an opportunity to express his own loathing of contemporary totalitarian dictatorship. That he set the last stanza (which Byron excised from his final version of the poem) with its reference to Washington, 'the Cincinnatus of the West', perhaps indicates his faith in eventual victory, and pays a compliment to the country that had now been his home for eight years.

By nature Schoenberg was superbly equipped to compose music for this outpouring of passionate scorn. He gives the reciter the freer and simpler form of heightened declamation he favoured in his last works, in which pitches are only approximately indicated by reference to a central stave-line, but the rhythms are exactly notated, the general shape of phrases delineated, and more minute vocal inflections suggested by sharps and flats. The form of the work is free, though several principal motives recur and are developed—the welter of images borne along on the flood of Byron's tirade is reflected at every stage in the twists and turns of Schoenberg's coruscating stream of musical thought. The range of instrumental colour is very wide, and includes some highly memorable effects—for instance, the words 'but who would soar the solar height, to set in such an endless night?' are illustrated by an eerie, downward-swooping *glissando* in harmonics, played *sul ponticello*, *col legno* on viola and cello.

The *Ode* is a twelve-note work, but the most traditionally ‘tonal’ in sound that Schoenberg ever wrote. Its note-row allowed the formation of plentiful triadic chords: moreover, he here relaxed his customary vigilance against octave doublings, and began to re-order the notes of the row’s two hexachords with unprecedented licence, concentrating more on its characteristic interval structure than on an unalterable succession of tones. The result is often close to the harmonic world of the ‘late tonal’ works such as *Kol Nidre*, and the *Ode* at several points suggests—and finally cadences triumphantly into—the key of E-flat major. Its use is perhaps ironic—recalling the key of the *Eroica*, which Beethoven originally dedicated to Napoleon; and unmistakably ironic is the music for the line ‘the earthquake voice of victory’, where Schoenberg quotes the opening motive of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony!

In August 1946 Schoenberg suffered the near-fatal heart-attack mentioned in Chapter 4—and shortly afterwards, in a burst of creative energy, wrote what many consider one of his greatest works, the String Trio, Op. 45. Thomas Mann records a conversation about it with the composer in October of that year:

He told me about the new trio he had just completed, and about the experiences he had secretly woven into the composition—experiences of which the work was a kind of fruit. He had, he said, represented his illness and medical treatment in the music, including even the male nurses and all the other oddities of American hospitals. The work was extremely difficult to play, he said, in fact almost impossible, or at best only for three players of virtuoso rank; but, on the other hand, the music was very rewarding because of its extraordinary tonal effects.⁷

It would be misguided, even so, to regard the Trio as too exclusively a ‘fruit’ of Schoenberg’s ‘temporary death’ (he had, in fact, begun sketching it two months before the attack)—to regard it as pathological programme music or a musical medical report. Indeed, although Schoenberg later told Adolph Weiss that he had even depicted the entry of the hypodermic needle, the present writer sees no point in hunting out such details. The music is simply not comprehensible in those terms. It is enough to know that it reflects an experience of extreme physical and

⁷ *The Genesis of a Novel* (London, 1961, translated by Richard and Clara Winston), p. 172.

mental disorientation—and reflects it brilliantly, in violent dissonance and rhythmic disruption, the most intensive use Schoenberg ever made of ‘extraordinary tonal effects’ with string instruments, and above all, the fragmentation of melodic material. The freedom of form and expression is of an order Schoenberg had scarcely approached since *Erwartung*.

To seek to encompass such a desperate experience and give it artistic form is not necessarily morbid; first and foremost, it is the most convincing demonstration of being alive, of not having succumbed to disaster. Even so, the Trio would be a lesser work than it is were that *all* it contained. Rather, the physical catastrophe appears to have impelled Schoenberg to produce a creative statement that would sum up, in the most concentrated form, the essential aspects of his art. It is, therefore, not only the most adventurous piece he ever wrote, stylistically, structurally and in its application of the twelve-note method. It also enshrines the deepest contrasts. For every nightmarish passage of hammered chords, clicking *col legno* bowing or glassy harmonics, there is one of profound peace or reflective tenderness—and it is these elements, eventually, which are left unchallenged at the end. Though the ‘revolutionary’ aspects of the Trio have claimed most of the attention of commentators, it is the work’s expressive *totality* that is the most impressive thing about it. The point can hardly be better illustrated than by quoting the opening two bars, and the beginning of the second main section (Exx. 39*a* and *b* respectively):

Ex. 39

♩ = 60

Vln. *col legno*

Vla.

Cello

pp *sfpp* *pp* *f* *ff* *p*

Ex. 39 (continued)

The musical score for Ex. 39 (continued) is presented in two systems. The first system shows the Violin (Vln.) and Cello parts. The Violin part is in treble clef, and the Cello part is in bass clef. The time signature is 2/2, and the tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 60$. The Violin part is marked *p dolce* and *Meno mosso 4/4 mp*. The Cello part is marked *p dolce* and *Meno mosso 4/4 mp*. The score includes various musical notations such as trills, tremolandi, and harmonics. The second system continues the Cello part, marked *etc.*

The Trio returns to the single-movement form of Schoenberg's early works, but in a new way. The structure has five spans, three 'Parts' divided by two 'Episodes'. Part 1 and the First Episode together comprise what may loosely be termed the exposition. But we cannot think in terms of first and second subjects: motives there are in plenty, but they are short, and uncompromisingly juxtaposed—it is their manner of presentation, most of all, which characterizes these first two sections. Part 1, with Ex. 39*a*, plunges us into a fantastic world in which we seem to have lost our bearings completely. Trills, *tremolandi*, harmonics, rhythmic figures, snatches of melody, motivic blocks—graphic images and outbursts of frightening intensity—are flung, apparently at random, upon the listener. We seem to be at the centre of a psychological storm. But when Episode I begins we are confronted with something familiar, even comforting—a serene rising phrase on the violin, in a clear A major (Ex. 39*b*). The Episode then continues with more calm, pacifying material—though it is some time before an extended melodic statement appears.

Part 2 and the Second Episode can be viewed as a 'development'. Part 2 attempts to continue the tranquil moods of the First Episode, and for

the most part succeeds. Ex. 13, in Chapter 6, is a good example of the warmth and gentleness of much of the music: its sound-world seems almost to approach that of the late Beethoven quartets—and, considering the circumstances of its composition, it is not wholly fanciful to see in passages such as Ex. 13 a Schoenbergian equivalent of the ‘Heiliger Dankgesang’. In the Second Episode, however, the frenzied, disruptive music regains the upper hand, and explodes with new force at the outset of Part 3. This final section begins as a drastically compressed recapitulation of Part 1 and the First Episode: Exx. 39*a* and *b* both return verbatim, other bars are much altered, others simply disappear—Schoenberg concentrates on the most striking images of the earlier music. But a final fury of the ‘psychological storm’ gives way to one of Schoenberg’s most consolatory codas. A lyrical melody that first emerged in Part 2 is heard *cantabile* in the violin’s highest register, shining through a halo of harmonics from viola and cello, before the work floats light as thistledown to a quiet, undemonstrative close of profound calm; the Expressionist nightmare has finally been transcended.

Schoenberg’s last instrumental work, the *Phantasy*, Op. 47, ‘for violin with piano accompaniment’ followed three years later in 1949. The phrasing of the title is significant: the violin is the dominating instrument throughout, and Schoenberg actually composed the whole violin line before writing a note for the piano. There could be few clearer illustrations of the primacy of *melody* in his music, and the *Phantasy* is one of his most uninhibited demonstrations of melodic prowess. Ex. 40*b* below, for instance, is merely the opening of a beautifully sly waltz-tune. The String Trio’s traits of galvanic energy and extreme expressive diversity are maintained, while Schoenberg’s concern to compress several movements into one attains its ultimate refinement. There are five distinct sections, and the work lasts about eight minutes.

Ex. 40





Solo Keyboard Music

SCHOENBERG WAS NO PIANIST, AND SHOWED NO ESPECIAL INTEREST in the piano in his first mature works except as accompaniment to the voice. His earliest pianistic attempts have little distinction—witness the gauche, sub-Mendelssohnian, but withal rather likeable *Lied ohne Worte* of about 1891. A set of Three Piano Pieces completed in October 1894 are not unskilful (if still not very pianistic) essays in an effusive late-Romantic style, leaning especially on Brahms's late Capricci and Intermezzi—at that time the latest thing in piano music. Though somewhat heavy-handed (and occasionally requiring chordal stretches unplayable by a mere two hands) they are musically in no way contemptible—least of all the third, a *Presto* in A minor. The set of tuneful, rather Schubertian four-hand pieces of 1896 benefits from its distinctly modest formal ambitions. At this stage of his development, clearly, Schoenberg was more at ease in writing for voices or strings.

Yet the first true totally-chromatic work was the epoch-making *Three Piano Pieces* Op. 11, of 1909. It may be that entry into this new musical region, as well as the experience gained in the accompaniments of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, had liberated Schoenberg from any inhibitions about the instrument: for the new harmonic vocabulary dictated an entirely new kind of pianism, in which he need fear no competitors, and could have no peers.

Yet inevitably, in a composer so creatively concerned with tradition, the 'newness' is only relative. Through the keyboard layout and emotional

content of Op. 11 we still discern the influence of late Brahms. The deep basses, massive chords, syncopations and cross-rhythms—these are all Brahmsian features, but employed within a totally-chromatic context their effect is quite different. It is a totally thematic context too, so that Brahms's characteristically detailed motivic working is extended by Schoenberg to virtually every figure.

Beyond the broad stylistic similarities these are three very different compositions. They all, none the less, convey a sense of a frontier having been irrevocably crossed, and a definite choice of roads now lying open. Nos. 1 and 2 take paths which never entirely lose sight of the frontier: some at least of their powerful elegiac effect derives from the extent to which they are still haunted by tonal functions. In No. 2 this produces an extreme tension—we feel the opening F–D pedal in the bass ought to define a key-centre, while the melodic line does its best to reject the implication:

Ex. 41

The musical score for Ex. 41, titled 'Mässige', is written for piano. It is in 12/8 time and begins with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic. The right hand (treble clef) starts with a whole rest, followed by a melodic line in the bass register. The left hand (bass clef) plays a continuous eighth-note pattern. A 'rit.' (ritardando) marking is placed over the right hand's melodic line. The score is divided into three measures by vertical bar lines.

Instead the dragging 'pedal', recurring again and again, becomes a motive in its own right, an obsessive, sinister force binding to earth the music's flights of passion; and back to which it must sink, exhausted, after a tremulous, fluttering *ff* climax in high register. No. 1 is more tranquil, more self-determining in its total thematicism—tonality here is at most a distant memory of *Tristan*. The third piece, by contrast, troubles nothing about what music once was, but lunges out boldly into new regions. This is the earliest (and one of the most radical) of Schoenberg's attempts to discover a new formal imperative that could direct the new language of total chromaticism. While the other pieces display more traditional

elements of development and recapitulation, Op. 11 No. 3 is cast as a continuously—apparently intuitively—unfolding sequence of diverse, self-contained ideas. None of them is repeated, each functions as a little ‘development section’ on its own, and progress to the next seems principally the result of accumulated momentum: a momentum created by the rate of discharge of musical thought.¹ Schoenberg imposes a unity, a linear sequence, upon a string of tenuously related events almost by sheer will-power—from the explosive chords of the opening to the cryptic diminuendo with which the piece ends. Only in *Erwartung* was he to succeed in something comparable on the largest scale, for the self-contained ‘non-tonal’ fragment has a fatal tendency to act as an expressive end in itself.

The problem is seen most clearly in the *Six Little Piano Pieces*, Op. 19, of 1911, which are the briefest of miniatures. No. 1, the longest, occupies only eighteen bars, the shortest (Nos. 2 and 3) nine each. They illustrate the stubborn self-sufficiency of the material with which Schoenberg was trying to work in his larger compositions; the pregnancy of each phrase, the hyper-emotional concern with the passing moment that is such a feature of musical ‘Expressionism’. This was what Webern turned into such a virtue in his own music. But Schoenberg’s struggle, at this period, was almost always to wrest larger forms from the intense fragments, and for him such a lapse into epigram is rare. After hearing these pieces we may detect the note of personal experience in the famous preface he wrote for the 1924 publication of Webern’s *Bagatelles* for string quartet. ‘Think what self-denial is necessary’, he says there, ‘to cut a long story so short . . . to convey a novel in a single gesture, or happiness by one catch of the breath.’

However, the language of Op. 19 is not Webernian. Rather these pieces present an extreme distillation of the expressive essence that informs Op. 11, isolating single elements in simpler, more delicate textures, pinning them down like a butterfly to a board. Perhaps the most moving

¹ Schoenberg’s autograph first draft of Op. 11 No. 3 reveals that he made a substantial deletion early in the piece, cutting out a passage marked by several repetitions of phrases and figurations—presumably because its character undermined the state of constant change shown by the rest of the movement. It is notable that in producing his ‘Concert Interpretation’ of Op. 11 No. 2, Busoni felt impelled to introduce many more phrase-repetitions in that piece, sometimes at different octave transpositions, than Schoenberg had allowed himself.

of the six is the last, with its two tolling bell-like chords that sound throughout the piece. Schoenberg wrote it after accompanying Mahler's coffin to the grave-side. This, too, speaks volumes in a 'catch of the breath'—a sigh (*ein Hauch*):

Ex. 42

The musical score for Ex. 42 consists of three measures. The first measure begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the instruction *mit sehr zarten Ausdruck*. It features a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a half note, both marked with a '3' and a slur. The second measure is marked *pp* and *genau im Takt*, showing a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a half note, both marked with a '3' and a slur. The third measure is marked *ppp* and *wie ein Hauch*, featuring a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a half note, both marked with a '3' and a slur. The score concludes with a final *ppp* marking and a half note in the bass staff.

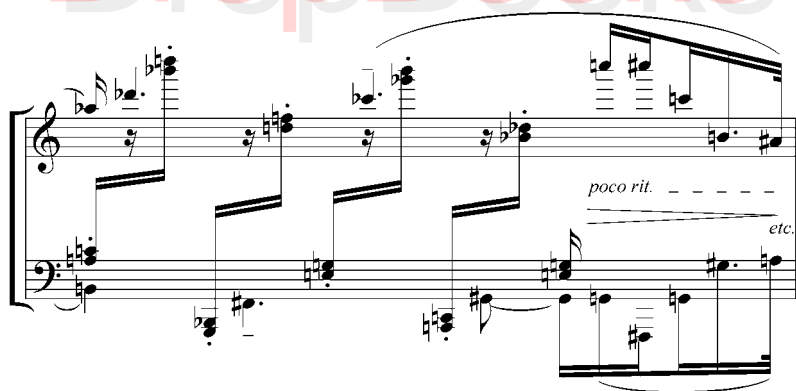
The *Five Piano Pieces*, Op. 23 and the *Suite for Piano*, Op. 25 were composed concurrently between 1920 and 1923, at the crucial period of Schoenberg's creative life when he was moving at last into 'composition with twelve notes related only to each other'. The fifth piece of Op. 23, a Waltz, was the first twelve-note composition to be published (in November 1923); but the Prelude and Intermezzo of Op. 25, not published till June 1925, were the first twelve-note pieces Schoenberg actually composed (in July 1921)—they were, therefore, the substance of the 'discovery' he spoke about to Josef Rufer in Traunkirchen (see p. 54). Whereas the twelve-note Waltz exists in Op. 23 alongside music in less rigorous style, the *Suite* was the first entire work to be derived from one note-row.

In fact, all the other Op. 23 pieces exhibit serial procedures, since each is founded on a little row or rows containing a varying number of notes (the maximum number, in the second piece, is ten). Naturally enough this interesting evolutionary stage in Schoenberg's language has, like the non-serial movements of the Op. 24 *Serenade*, tended to bulk larger in importance for most commentators than the expressive content of the pieces themselves.

The piano style of Op. 23 is now far removed from the Brahmsian archetype. The textures are translucent, and Schoenberg uses the whole range of the keyboard with a delicacy that suggests a kind of 'Expressionist Impressionism'. Though complex in structure, conveying a succession of fleeting moods with great subtlety, these pieces are more objective than the intense Opp. 11 and 19—each has a touch of the light-fantastic about it. The first (*Sehr langsam*), with its calm, flowing onward movement, is a three-part invention, spinning its chromatic counterpoint with Bach-like tranquillity. The second (*Sehr rasch*) is a small-scale sonata-form exposition and development; but the listener is more likely to hear it first of all as a succession of vigorous upward-rushing figures, rising to a brief climax and ending with a slow coda that reverses the direction and sinks down once more into the depths.

No. 3 (*Langsam*) is the longest, the most extensively developed, and the most lyrical of the *Five Pieces*. It could almost be a nocturne, with its shimmering trills and gleams of luminous piano colour. In this piece Schoenberg's keyboard writing attains a crystal clarity that even Ravel might have admired: see Ex. 43, and note its contrary motion.

Ex. 43



The fourth piece (*Schwungvoll*) is the scherzo of the set, in which no fewer than five note-cells are pulled about in a concentrated and capricious development. It rises to an impassioned central climax, from which the music relaxes progressively to a surprisingly tender close.

The last piece, the famous twelve-note Waltz, is hardly a waltz for dancing to, but rather a highly stylized fantasy in waltz-time, not without a hint of affectionate parody. It comes to a gently poetic end, evanescent in a repeated trill that suggests curtains stirred in the draughts of a deserted ballroom.

The dance-models for the various movements of the Op. 25 *Suite* are much more obvious, both in rhythm and formal layout. Indeed on first acquaintance it seems odd to find this 'revolutionary' twelve-note music comfortably accommodated in ancient ternary structures, complete with formal repeat sections: in one sense the *Suite* contains more literal repetition than any other work of Schoenberg. From 'Expressionist Impressionism' we appear to have moved into 'Serial Neoclassicism'. But that is not the real state of affairs: the work is not 'Neo-' anything. Unlike the venture into total chromaticism, in which every further step he took was fraught with imponderable dangers, the discovery of the twelve-note method provided Schoenberg with a law by which his music could live—and, as Goethe once remarked, it is only in laws that we find true freedom. It is more likely that, just as he confined himself throughout the *Suite* to only four forms of the note-row (above, p. 141), at first he needed the strict design of the old forms simply to 'put a brake' on his fertility of invention while he worked out the implications of the new style.

The central Intermezzo inhabits again the subtle world of the Op. 23 pieces. For the rest, the *Suite* is a sardonic divertimento 'im Alten/Neuen Stil', a witty recreation of the Bachian keyboard suite in twentieth-century guise (the twelve-note row actually includes the B-A-C-H motive in retrograde). The *Präludium*, with its repeated notes and semiquaver flourishes, poses as an updated Baroque toccata; and the gawky Gavotte, tripping Musette (using a tritone instead of a perfect fifth as a drone bass), the periwigged Minuet with its sternly professorial canonic Trio (see Ex. 14), and the wildly abandoned Gigue all display Schoenberg's musical humour at its best. The element of parody is obvious enough in some of his late tonal works: the respect in which the twelve-note ones are held ought not to prevent us from acknowledging it in some of them as well.

Yet perhaps Schoenberg's ripest music for solo piano has tended to be eclipsed by the historical importance of Op. 25. His last two piano pieces, written in 1928 and 1931 and published as Op. 33A and 33B respectively, are not epoch-making. But each is a grand synthesis of the best aspects of

the preceding piano works. Each might stand as a concert item on its own, for they are broadly similar in layout—each has two principal subjects which are extensively developed in true Schoenbergian manner, but kept distinct and recognizable throughout. As a pair, the pieces make a twentieth-century counterpart to Brahms's Two Rhapsodies, Op. 79.

Their language, though twelve-note, has something of the late-Romantic warmth and tonal suggestiveness of Op. 11—but viewed with the ‘objectivity’ of the Op. 23 pieces and the *Suite*, and expressed in piano writing that matches theirs in gracefulness, though it has a richer, mellower texture. Thus Op. 33A and B emerge as at once the subtlest and most relaxed of Schoenberg's piano pieces. Here the composer has no need of strict dance-forms to discipline his inventiveness—nor indeed of any narrow view of twelve-note ‘orthodoxy’: in Op. 33, as in the other works of his Berlin years, it is rapidly becoming clear that serialism is precisely what Schoenberg makes of it. Opus 33A, for instance, announces its row not as a melodic line but as a lush succession of four-note chords, which are only given melodic identity towards the end of the piece. Opus 33B, after an ambling opening that states *its* row in the clearest possible terms, passes on to an amiable idea in which, because of plentiful note-repetition, key-feeling is very strong:

Ex. 44

The musical score for Ex. 44 is written for piano. It is in 2/4 time. The upper staff, in treble clef, starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. It contains a melodic line with a slur over the first four measures and a fermata over the last two. The lower staff, in bass clef, starts with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic and the instruction *molto staccato*. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The piece concludes with the word *etc.* in the upper right corner.

This kind of passage points forward to the more euphonious harmonic world of some of Schoenberg's later compositions, which is only one reason why the two pieces of Op. 33 are among his most representative works, and a good introduction to his many-sided art.

Much fine piano music still lay ahead—in the *Ode to Napoleon* and the Piano Concerto—but no more solo pieces. Instead, and rather ironically, Schoenberg's largest keyboard composition was for the organ, an instrument with which he had only limited sympathy. As early as 1907 he had criticized the Romantic-style organ of the day for its tendency to obscure the different voices in contrapuntal music and its inability to make any but the roughest alteration in dynamics. The same viewpoint underlies his orchestral arrangements of Bach organ works. Later he envisaged the appearance of a much more adaptable machine, somewhat on the lines of the present-day electronic synthesizer. Nevertheless, a commission from the publisher of a series of contemporary organ works led Schoenberg, in 1941, to essay two pieces whose musical content far outweighs their occasional conflicts with the limitations of their specified medium.

The first, an Organ Sonata, was never finished. But its largest fragment—a substantial portion of a *Moderato* first movement—has been played and published, and other hands have attempted its completion. A rhythmically lively, quite light-textured piece, with some virtuoso writing that anticipates the style of the Piano Concerto, it shows a marked preoccupation, harmonically and melodically, with chains of perfect fourths *à la* Chamber Symphony No. 1. There is also a short fragment of another movement (an *Allegretto* with a delightfully waltz-like main theme) and brief sketches for at least two more. However, for reasons which remain obscure, Schoenberg abandoned the Sonata and fulfilled the commission instead with the *Variations on a Recitative*, Op. 40—a massive work comprising a theme, ten variations, an unbarred 'cadenza' and a freely fugal finale, which stands in the great tradition of such works as Brahms's *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel*.

Whereas the unfinished Sonata is a twelve-note work, the *Variations* inhabits a highly chromatic D minor. This does not mean the latter is the less 'dissonant' work: if anything, the reverse is the case. The harmonic world is much the same; the theme of the *Variations* (which includes all twelve notes) shares some features with the Sonata's note-row, and there is again a marked predilection for chains of fourths in melody and harmony. The rate of modulation is quite as high as in most twelve-note works, and in fact Schoenberg employs quasi-serial organization of pitch in this faintly more traditional tonal context. The real difference is that the

'tonal' work is much denser in texture, darker and more violent in character, than the twelve-note one.

The opening of the so-called Recitative—a complex, rather declamatory theme comprising seven short independently variable phrases—closely recalls the sinister motif (also in D minor) of Waldemar's midnight song ('unhallowed spirits rise from forgotten graves') in the *Gurrelieder* (see Ex. 17*b*, p. 161). Not only the 'Recitative', but also two subsidiary motifs introduced in the first variation, are exhaustively developed throughout the work in some of the most elaborate contrapuntal complexes (in up to seven voices) found in Schoenberg's entire output. Despite the greatly diversified character of the variations, the prevailing mood is grim and uneasy. When the music finally clinches its arguments on a thunderous triad of D major, triumph is implicit, but it has been very hard won, and has swayed in the balance till that very last chord. The *Variations on a Recitative* is utterly characteristic Schoenberg, and one of his most searching works; but as one of the most difficult pieces in the organ repertoire it is, unhappily, seldom performed. Perhaps, in truth, it demands more of the instrument than it can deliver, and only an orchestral version could really bring out its full qualities.

DropBooks



The Songs

SCHOENBERG COMPOSED ONE IMMORTAL SONG-CYCLE, BUT WE DO not usually rank him among the great Lieder composers. His songs with piano have been less influential than his works in other media. *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* and a few other items apart, his finest Lieder may be found among the *Gurrelieder* and in the Op. 22 Orchestral Songs. Nor was song-writing a continuing passion: in the last half of his life, Schoenberg seemed virtually to have ‘outgrown’ the medium, with the result that the really mature songs are comparatively few. But neither are his songs negligible. At least they throw interesting sidelights on his literary taste, and the best of them deserve a high place in the repertoire of any singer who favours the works of Richard Strauss, Hugo Wolf, and Mahler.

Brahms and Wolf were still active Lieder-writers at the outset of Schoenberg’s career, and song-composition seems to have come naturally to him as the principal compositional activity of his early years—just as it did, a few years later, to Berg and Webern before they became Schoenberg’s pupils. He wrote nearly forty songs before 1900, not counting many more that he abandoned. Yet only seven of these were published in his lifetime, in his collections Opp. 1, 2, and 3. Most of them are undated, and the order of their composition has to be inferred from stylistic features or circumstantial detail. But many—certainly those in the groups Opp. 1–3—are richer in substance than most Lieder of the period, for there is never any suggestion of mere repetition in material or figuration.

Some of the other songs that Schoenberg allowed to remain unpublished do show such repetition and occasional compositional awkwardness, though their lyric impulse and natural understanding of the medium are patent. Taken as a whole, the published and unpublished songs of the 1890s illustrate his evolution from reliance on contemporary models to more individual utterance. They also show his rapidly developing mastery of chromatic harmony, if not quite with the intensity he was achieving in other fields. Though the tonality of several songs ranges far in a short musical space, most of them begin and end firmly on tonic triads. The piano writing is assured and reasonably idiomatic, though less adventurous or intrinsically interesting than his contemporary treatment of the orchestra or chamber ensemble—but he is clearly well adapted to the genre, well able to undertake songs of widely differing characters.¹ His practice in vocal composition seems to have been to compose the vocal line first, before the piano accompaniment, and there are instances where, through successive drafts, the basic vocal line is retained while the accompaniments are changed completely.

According to David Josef Bach, Schoenberg started composing Lieder during the summer of 1893, with *In hellen Träumen hab' ich Dich oft geschaut*, to a poem by a schoolfriend, Alfred Gold. This song, along with his other earliest surviving examples, make very clear how deeply he was imbued with the prevailing late Romantic ethos. Apart from personal acquaintances like Gold, Schoenberg's chosen poets include several (Goethe, Heyse, Keller, Lingg, Reinick) who were also set by Brahms, although certain representatives of a younger literary generation, such as Dehmel and Hofmannsthal, soon make an appearance. An unusual feature is the large number of these early Lieder that are settings of verses of Ludwig Pfau, a Heilbronn-born poet and leftist politician associated with the revolution of 1848. Though most of the Pfau poems that Schoenberg

¹ This seems the appropriate place to mention a single isolated early song for tenor with string quartet accompaniment, *Es ist ein Flüstern in der Nacht* ('There is a whisper in the night') of unknown date (early or mid-1890s?) and setting an unknown author (Dika Newlin has commented that the verses read 'rather like bad imitation Heine' and has hazarded that Schoenberg himself might have written them). Presumably written for Schoenberg's cousin Hans Nachod to sing, it is quite an effective little piece in a generalized Romantic style with few individual touches, unless we except the turn from the main key (E minor) to the Neapolitan (F minor), a characteristic key-shift in Schoenberg's early works.

set are quite conventional, his partiality for the poet may be a reflection of his socialistic ideals and those of his friends in the 1890s. Pfau's death in 1894 may also have focussed his attention on this author; but Schoenberg's interest in him seems to have waned before he had advanced as far as his first published *Lieder*.

The forms of such songs as *Ein Schilflied* (summer 1893, to one of the many 'Reed Songs' by Nikolaus Lenau) and *Mein Herz das ist ein tiefer Schacht* ('My heart is a deep mine-shaft', c. 1894–6, poem by an unknown author) are strophic, like many of Brahms's, though with attempted modification of each strophe through extending or diminishing salient phrases. This is more successful in the gravely atmospheric *Schilflied*, than in the rhetorically ambitious but withal slightly sentimental *Mein Herz*. These early Schoenberg songs are less accomplished than those that Zemlinsky was writing at the same period, but the younger composer's native talent is clear enough. In general Schoenberg's models and techniques are Brahmsian, though used haltingly at first—but these rarely, even when completely mastered, result in a mere echo of Brahmsian sound. An exception is *Waldesnacht* ('Forest at Night', c. 1894–6), which sets a poem by Brahms's friend Paul Heyse² that is full of Brahmsian poetic tropes—cool night, distant flutes, birdsong, and bird-flight. Here the syncopations and varied keyboard textures that Schoenberg creates are very Brahmsian in effect; though some of the writing remains more obvious than the mature Brahms would have let pass, the techniques are on the whole impressively assimilated.

This is already evolving into something more individual in a song such as *Mädchenfrühling* ('Maiden's Spring', 1897), probably Schoenberg's first setting of Richard Dehmel. The rippling semiquaver figuration, which persists throughout, moves easily through subtle modulations hinting at the girl's half-suppressed doubts about her lover and the expression is concise, even aphoristic, as if the whole song was conceived in a single breath. Dehmel is also the poet of two more ambitious *Lieder*. *Mannesbängen* ('A Man's anxiety')—which belongs probably to the same period as the Dehmel-inspired *Verklärte Nacht*, therefore c. 1899—reveals something of Schoenberg's dramatic ambitions; it sets a sexually charged

² Zemlinsky, too, set numerous Heyse texts during the 1890s.

poem in appropriately disturbed style. Here the 'Brahmsian' syncopations between the hands give way to wild flurries of voluble figuration, a dramatic, almost recitative-like vocal line and some quietly shocking keyboard dissonance before the swift return of the opening motif. Less openly erotic but no less suggestive in a lighter manner, *Nicht doch!* (c. 1897), a song of young love among the fields, is one of Schoenberg's most delightful songs, beautifully worked out motivically on quite a large scale, with an infectious lilt and subtle cross-rhythms which successfully carry the listener across abrupt changes of subject and texture. In *Die Beiden* ('The Pair', 1899), Schoenberg sets a poem by his exact Viennese contemporary, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and several years before the beginning of Hofmannsthal's famous collaboration with Strauss³ produces a song almost Straussian in its vaunting mood and aspiring contours.

To turn from these plentiful evidences of lyric song-writing talent to Schoenberg's first actual published Lieder, the Two *Gesänge* for baritone, Op. 1, is to be brought up short. These songs, which he composed about 1898 and dedicated to Zemlinsky, are different in fibre and orientation from any so far discussed. They are the first to specify a deep male voice, and they are intended—if rather self-consciously—to be 'deep' in content. They are not simply settings of their chosen texts but, rather, use those texts in order to make an artistic statement. They are the biggest songs in size and duration that Schoenberg ever wrote—in one modern recording *Abschied* lasts eleven minutes!—and their models, instead of Brahms's late lyric Lieder from the 1880s, are quite clearly his profoundly serious *Emste Gesänge* of 1894. However their texts are not Biblical like Brahms's but rather sententiously Romantic ones by Karl Freiherr von Levetzow (1871–1945), who was then considered a leading member of the new 'Realistic' movement in German literature.

Although the two poems may be separate compositions Schoenberg treats them in effect as a diptych: his settings share some material and are quasi-symphonic in organization. In 'Dank' (Thanks) the poet tells his former beloved that the pain she has caused him has 'given him greatness'; in 'Abschied' (Farewell) he bids farewell as she becomes a 'bright star of stars' while he turns to the night and summons 'the highest

³ In fact, in 1900 Hofmannsthal collaborated with Zemlinsky on a ballet, *Der Triumph der Zeit*.

comforter of the gods, / My self-born primeval power'. 'I myself become night and beauty', he says, in a phrase which seems to anticipate the 'Transfigured Night' of *Verklärte Nacht* (and also the Nirvana of the Second String Quartet: 'I lose myself in tones...'). Schoenberg was often to favour such expressions of defiant isolation, of endurance in fierce creative solitude: 'Abschied' moreover links this isolation with a deliberate introspective movement, a recourse to the artist's inner world, where he remains unbowed and undiminished despite external reverses. From this point of view his first published opus is appropriately prophetic, adumbrating an attitude that would be reinforced in many later works. From its calm, spacious opening 'Dank' builds its way to an impassioned rhetorical climax that is briefly more Wagnerian than Brahmsian. 'Abschied' opens in more depressed mood but builds higher, borne up by a piano-part of virtuoso difficulty that would not have sounded out of place in a piano concerto. The overall effect is however still rather immature: neither song is varied enough for its length, and in each case the climax relies too much on conventional *tremolando* effects for the piano.

The Four Lieder, Op. 2 (all probably composed in 1899—three of them certainly were) and the Six Lieder Op. 3 (composed between 1899 and 1903) revert to the smaller dimensions, and at least one of the poets—Dehmel—of the earlier songs. The four Op. 2 songs are quite short and effective mood-pictures. The voice-part gains independence from the piano, and from now on is always the principal line. 'Erhebung' (Exaltation) is a simple love-poem, quite conventionally but attractively set. 'Jesus bittet' (Jesus begs) is less straightforward, being a love-song to Mary Magdalene, which Schoenberg sets in a more tortuously chromatic idiom that successfully disguises the main key for extended periods, though the result has a Wagnerian rather than Schoenbergian tinge. Both poems are by Richard Dehmel, and so is 'Erwartung' (Expectation): 1899, the date of all three songs, was surely Schoenberg's 'Dehmel year'. 'Erwartung' is a particularly beautiful song in which a lover waits in the moonlight for an assignation by 'the sea-green pond near the red villa'. The scene is illuminated with a motif that might have come from, and certainly points the way towards, *Verklärte Nacht*, greatest of all his Dehmel-inspired works (Ex. 45).

Ex. 45

Sehr Langsam

Aus dem meer - grü - nen Tei - che ne - ben der ro - ten Vil - la

Piano

The fourth song, 'Waldsonne' (Forest Sun), to a poem by Johannes Schlaf (better known as a playwright and disciple of Walt Whitman) that celebrates the lasting value of summer memories, is also a lovely piece, with a delightfully infectious lilt and straightforward tunefulness characteristic of Schoenberg's earliest period.

The Six Songs Op. 3 mark a further advance, and on the whole are more dramatic in character than Op. 2. The first, 'How Georg von Frundsberg sang of himself', is the monologue of a proud, upright, god-fearing knight whose services were ignored at court.⁴ Schoenberg sets the poem (from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*) to appropriately sturdy, deeply felt music. 'Die Aufgeregten' (The flustered ones, setting a poem by the great Swiss poet Gottfried Keller) is more tongue-in-cheek: a mock-pathetic prelude and postlude enclose a tragedy under the magnifying glass, the 'passion and savage grief' of butterflies, bees and flowers in the wild May breeze. The most dramatic and maybe the most remarkable of the set—but also the earliest, dated (yet again) 1899—is another Dehmel setting, 'Warnung' (Warning). The speaker has had his dog killed because it growled at the woman he loves ('I hate everybody who makes trouble'); last night he saw her with someone else; tonight, she had better be alone—'You: remember my dog!' The swift-moving piano conveys the man's repressed fury, and the frequent stress on 'Du' (normally the familiar, affectionate form of 'you') is sinisterly effective.

⁴ Georg von Frundsberg or Fronsberg (1473–1528) was an important soldier and mercenary leader of the time of Luther, who died in the service of the French king. Schoenberg must have found his character sympathetic as he later began a choral work on a parallel *Knaben Wunderhorn* text, 'How the war-band sang of Georg von Fronsberg'.

The three remaining songs are simpler. 'Hochzeitslied' (Wedding Song, to a text by Jacobsen, the poet of the *Gurrelieder*) is a strophic song with a fine swinging tune and chordal accompaniment, no less effective for its directness. 'Geübtes Herz' (The experienced heart, another Keller setting) is a beautiful love-song of a different kind—the subtle shading of the piano part is appropriate to the 'practised' heart of the speaker, so much more valuable for having loved so often already. The set concludes with 'Freihold' (Independence), to a poem celebrating the Romantic archetype of the Man Alone, secure in the force of his will, like a milestone withstanding wind, rain and lightning. Schoenberg's setting, dated 1900, manifests a certain rhythmic four-squareness, yet enlists our affection by reason of its youthful teeth-gritting passion and the gusto of its bold refrain. The author here is Hermann Lingg, who had furnished Brahms with the text of one of his greatest songs (the immortal *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer*, from Op. 105); and Schoenberg set another of Lingg's poems in 1900, although the result remained unpublished until long after his death. *Gruss in die Ferne* (Greetings from afar) is perhaps more conventional in expression than anything in Op. 3. Yet it is a beautifully shaped, quietly ecstatic song with some subtle harmonic shading that compares well with the quieter songs from *Gurrelieder*.

With the Eight Songs Op. 6 (1903–5) we arrive at the period of Schoenberg's early maturity. Stylistically they illustrate his development as far as the First String Quartet; their especially thorough motivic working is the furthest extension along the lines explored by Schumann, Brahms, and Wolf. Almost every song is built on one or two figures of a few notes each, which Schoenberg develops continually, whether by transposition, augmentation, diminution, or in retrograde or inverted forms, in a way that clearly anticipates his later serial practices. But the songs are most important as music in their own right, consistently surpassing the best things in the earlier groups. 'Traumleben' (Dream-life) is a rapt, ecstatic love-song whose mood presages that of the finale of the Second Quartet. The vocal line's intensity is heightened by the use of wide-leaping intervals, particularly major sevenths and minor ninths, that foreshadow the characteristic expressive phraseology of the freely chromatic and serial works. But the work towards which Schoenberg is most clearly moving, both in this song and in the tremulous half-lights of the next, 'Alles' (Everything)—another Dehmel setting—is *Das Buch der*

hängenden Gärten. 'Mädchenlied', a girl's song to her bold lover, is suitably breathless and impulsive, while 'Verlassen' (Forsaken) graphically portrays a forsaken lover walking the empty streets in the grip of black despair. The song is founded almost entirely on a sullen, dragging chromatic figure of four notes rising by successive semitones. A very similar figure is crucial to the next song, 'Ghazel'—an imitation of the Persian *ghazal* form, by Gottfried Keller—but here the expressive effect is entirely different. It is one of Schoenberg's most glowing songs, harmonically simpler than most of the set though no less intricate in motivic work; its serene melodiousness accords well with the poet's assurance that human love is as much part of the natural order as the arrangement of petals on a rose.

Fine songs though these five are, they are if anything surpassed by the last three. In 'Am Wegrund' (By the Wayside), to a poem by the Scoto-German writer John Henry Mackay, a man stands on the sidelines of life, watching the passing human throng, staring in vain for the one person who will give meaning to his existence. The strong, swift-moving, self-contained piano part has a powerful impetus that suggests the heedless bustle of the roadway, and the tragedy of the speaker's unwilling alienation from it. The teasing, delicate wit of 'Lockung' (Enticement) is a complete contrast: this is a cajoling seduction with a deliciously light, playfully capricious piano part. Harmonically it is the most advanced and free-floating of the set, and I am inclined to rate it the most perfect; but it is run very close by the final song, 'Der Wanderer'. Nietzsche's text is a kind of parable of how the *Sturm und Drang* of early Romanticism decays into late-Romantic sentimentalism. It describes that archetypal Romantic figure, the lone wanderer, striding resolutely through the night. But he is halted by the song of a nightingale; and though the bird patiently explains that the song was not for his ears and has nothing to do with the beauty of the night, he is unable to continue on his way. Schoenberg's setting characterizes every phrase with uncanny aptness, yet with an ironic objectivity and strict musical logic that exorcise the late-Romantic malaise just as surely as had the *Gurrelieder*.

The Six Songs for voice and orchestra, Op. 8, contain some fine inspirations, but taken as a whole the set (most of which preceded Op. 6) is something of a disappointment: the music, while not exactly 'regressive', lacks the character and precision we might expect. The orchestration, too, though efficient enough, sounds rather clotted when compared

with even the early parts of the *Gurrelieder*. 'Natur', to a poem by Heinrich Hart, is an impressive, noble-sounding, well-proportioned song, but also the most frankly Wagnerian of the set, so steeped in *Tristan* as to present almost no recognizable Schoenbergian personality. By contrast, 'Das Wappenschild' (The Coat of Arms), whose text comes from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, is the most forward-looking, with its wildly galloping rhythms, hectic yet tight-woven counterpoint, tonal instability, and its quite un-Debussyian use of the whole-tone scale, which anticipates important features of the First Chamber Symphony.

The briefest number, 'Sehnsucht' (Longing), another *Wunderhorn* setting, brings to mind Mahler's song-cycle from that source in its *Ländler*-like character, the deceptive simplicity of the vocal line, and the wry delicacy of the orchestration. The remainder of the set is occupied by three Petrarch settings. 'Nie ward' ich, Herrin, müd' (Never, mistress, did I tire), with its bombastic orchestral postlude, is probably the least interesting; 'Voll jener Süsse' (Full of that sweetness) is better, but the high point of Op. 8 is undoubtedly the third Petrarch setting, 'Wenn Vöglein klagen' (When little birds weep). As in 'Sehnsucht', the orchestration is free from the prevailing thickness of the rest of the set; the flute's melancholy bird-cry persists throughout the song with plangent effect; and there is an ecstatic climax, worthy of the composer of the *Gurrelieder*, at the words 'Do not mourn for me—I have died to enjoy eternal presence'. The song ends with an orchestral postlude of great beauty, the equal of any in the better-known orchestral songs of Richard Strauss.

'Der verlorene Haufen' (The Suicide Squad) and 'Jane Grey' were written in early 1907 as entries for a competition, sponsored by the Berlin periodical *Die Woche*, for the best settings from a new anthology of German ballads. (Zemlinsky also entered, setting the same two texts.) They were unsuccessful—the winners were now-forgotten composers—but Schoenberg's songs were published together in 1920 as *Two Ballads*, Op. 12. In keeping with the balladic tradition they are expansive songs with clearly defined refrains and immediate melodic appeal, but they sacrifice nothing in richness of musical thought. 'Jane Grey' is a very great song, worthy to stand with the ballads of Schubert and Loewe. Every detail in the tale of the execution of Queen Jane and her husband is caught in a spirit of tragic nobility, no less effective for being understated, until the music flowers into a great lament at the words 'Many maidens

have died young from the highlands to the sea, but none was more lovely and innocent than Dudley's wife, Jane Grey':

Ex. 46

Etwas fließender

Viel jun - ge Da - men star - ben schon vom Hoch - land bis zur See

p

8va

etc.

After this, pathetic, fluttering figures in the piano's highest register evoke the chill wind blowing across the young queen's grave. 'Der verlorene Haufen' (poem by Viktor Klemperer) is not quite so fine, and performed after 'Jane Grey' is likely to sound rather hectoring, portraying as it does the bravado of soldiers drinking a last toast before going into a battle they know they will not survive. But it is an exciting song that swings along with tremendous impetus: in character and harmonic language it recalls 'Das Wappenschild' from Op. 8, but is undoubtedly a superior work.

The Two Songs Op. 14 (1907–8) are immediately contemporary with the Second String Quartet—and like that work they form a bridge to Schoenberg's so-called atonal period, and must partly arise from his feelings about his marital crisis. They are his last songs to employ key-signatures; and though both achieve their intensity through a continuous apparent suspension of tonality, with harmony built on fourths rather than thirds, they still float in the orbit of definite key-centres. 'Ich darf nicht dankend' (I must not thank you) seems to antedate the third and fourth movements of the quartet and must thus be Schoenberg's first setting of Stefan George; it is an impressive song, concise and restrained yet with an oddly haunted atmosphere that conveys much which is not directly expressed. The other song of Op. 14—'In diesen Wintertagen'

(In these winter days) is one of the most beautiful in Schoenberg's entire output. The poem, by Karl Friedrich Henckell, tells how love and friendship can light up the winter of the soul; and the setting has a quiet rapture and serenity that etch a passage like the opening ('In these winter days, when light veils itself') unforgettably on the mind.

Ex. 47

In die-sen Win-ter-ta-gen nun sich das Licht ver-hüllt

(pp)

During much of 1908 and the beginning of 1909 Schoenberg composed his most important set of songs, the cycle *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15—fifteen lyrics from Stefan George's collection 'The Book of the Hanging Gardens'. George was a poet of sensitivity and aristocratic poise, able to condense much powerful yet clearly apprehended emotion in a few beautifully proportioned lines. The poems of the 'Hanging Gardens' (of which Schoenberg set about half) are all miniatures, elliptically relating the progress of an intense, ultimately doomed love-affair. There is a beautiful, aristocratic woman; a man (the narrator) abashed, awkward, impulsive, who loves and loses her; and as background and objective correlative, a landscape garden, formally laid out but essentially wild—at first a paradise, later alien and uninvolved.

In a famous, but ambiguous, note for the first performance, Schoenberg said that in *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* he had for the first time succeeded in 'approaching an ideal of expression and form' which had been before him for many years (see p. 13). Expression and form—that is, matching words and music, just as George matched feeling and words, in an indissoluble organic unity; *not* 'atonality', though that is what many

commentators have taken Schoenberg's words to mean. The treatment of tonality is merely an adjunct to the larger 'ideal', and is as varied as the expression demands. Though the songs lack key-signature, their language is no more dissonant than in Op. 14; they employ the same already familiar Schoenbergian harmonies built on fourths, but chains of thirds and triads are still an essential ingredient, imparting a strong tonal feeling in many places with clear harmonic logic. And, though most of the songs eschew a conclusive cadence, many of them clearly have a main key—no less an authority than Webern pointed out the G major nature of No. II; No. VIII has a strong pull to F minor; the D major of No. X is almost too obvious. In others (notably No. III) the 'tonal' feeling is strong without the main key ever revealing itself. In yet others certain fixed pitches function as centres of harmonic gravity, to which everything else has reference (cf. the repeated F sharps of No. XI, or the F of No. XIII); and some songs may be interpreted in more ways than one—for instance No. V, which leans towards G major, but also uses the tritone axis of the pitches A and E flat as 'reference' points of the kind already described.

The whole harmonic situation is thus not one of 'atonality' but of tonal *ambiguity* that reflects the spiritual labyrinth through which George's narrator wanders. The poetic images of the Hanging Gardens reflect interior emotional states; and so Schoenberg's music, too, is interior—not scene-painting, but the matching in music of fleeting yet complex moods. The vocal line, more supple and recitative-like than in any previous songs, is extraordinarily wide-ranging. Since much of it is low-lying, the cycle is customarily sung by a mezzo-soprano; but Schoenberg really has in mind a high soprano, whose low register, precisely because it lacks the mezzo's strength, can better achieve the quiet, almost whispered quality the music requires.

From the bald, unaccompanied, tonally equivocal, rhythmically ambiguous bass line with which the cycle opens, the songs traverse an amazing diversity of piano colour and texture. They can be very still or very swift-moving (though only one, the climactic No. VIII, is really fast in tempo); the accompaniment of No. V is almost entirely chordal, while others (for example No. III) are predominantly contrapuntal; the accompaniment of No. VII is for right hand only; No. VIII is wild and stormy; No. XIV, the penultimate song, the shortest (a mere eleven bars)

and the most delicate. By contrast, the final song, No. XV, is the longest and most varied within itself: perhaps, too, the greatest. The love-affair is over; and the narrator stumbles through the garden, distraught, on an oppressively hot night, his way impeded by the foliage, which is no longer that of Eden but something malevolent, while withered leaves hiss, driven

Ex. 48

(a) Mässig ($\text{♩} = 60$)

(b)



before the wind. The song begins with a desolate melodic line, shown in Ex. 48*a*, whose main figure (x) derives from No. XI (the cycle is full of subtle interconnections of this kind). Both this line and its accompanying chords are subjected to continual development in every conceivable way. Some of it is very complex; the actual climax (on the final line ‘The night is overcast and sultry’) is simpler in texture—but even so it can stand (Ex. 48*b*) as an epitome of the whole cycle, with its organic development of earlier material, low-lying vocal line, definite but ambiguous tonal progression, and subtle emotional world.

About the time he was composing *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Schoenberg also wrote an isolated setting of a poem by Rilke ‘Am Strande’ (On the Beach), which remained unpublished till well after his death. It is nevertheless one of his greatest songs, adapting the language developed in Op. 15 to quite different ends, and looking forward to the spirit of the Four Orchestral Songs Op. 22. The poem begins:

The high tide is past.

It still roars in the distance.

Wild water. And above

Star after star.

—and the suppressed violence of the extraordinary piano part, impelled by strange surging figures in the left hand, conjures up at once the menace of a distant, turbulent sea.

Schoenberg’s marked lack of interest in the song-medium after his achievement in Op. 15 is curious, and has never been wholly convincingly explained. Perhaps he simply felt the need of a more flexible medium than voice and piano alone could provide. At any rate his next and perhaps most extraordinary song was *Herzgewächse* (Foliage of the heart), Op. 20, for high soprano, celesta, harp and harmonium, written in 1911. Webern called this little Maeterlinck setting ‘the summit of music’, and it is chiefly famous for its immense difficulty, containing as it does one of the highest notes (a sustained F *in alt. pppp*) in the vocal repertoire. In fact the vocal range is within that of the Queen of the Night in Mozart’s *Magic Flute*, but was sufficient to ensure that *Herzgewächse* remained unperformed until 1928. The piece enacts an emotional progression towards spiritual fulfilment that is reminiscent of the finale of the Second

String Quartet. The poem speaks of ‘formless sorrows’ sinking to rest and prayer finally rising; so the soloist begins in her lowest register, among fragmentary flutterings and murmurs from the accompanying instruments, and soars progressively higher and higher until the voice floats far above a glinting ‘foliage’ of continually changing, merging and intertwining instrumental patterns. The final arching phrase, for all its difficulty, is when confidently sung a thing of breathtaking beauty:

Ex. 49

Langsam

zum Kry stall — dem blauen sen-det sie ihr my - sti-sches ge - bet

pppp

Although *Pierrot Lunaire* has much of the character of a song-cycle with chamber accompaniment, the very fact that the soloist does not, in fact, sing is sufficient to divorce it from Schoenberg's songs proper: in this book it is discussed within the category of his chamber music (see pp. 210–212). The most significant of all Schoenberg's true song collections, apart from Op. 15, is undoubtedly the set of Four Orchestral Songs Op. 22—which, written slowly over the period 1913–16, was the only new work he brought to completion in the ten-year gap between *Pierrot* and the earliest serial pieces. Of its constituent numbers, ‘Seraphita’ was written in Berlin in late 1913. ‘Alle, welche dich suchen’ and ‘Mach mich zum Wächter’ followed during the winter of 1914–15; finally, while serving with the Austrian army, he completed the set with ‘Vorgefühl’ in July 1916. In mid-1915 ‘Alle, welche dich suchen’ was printed in the Munich-based journal *Zeit-Echo: ein Kriegs-Tagebuch der Künstler* (Echo of the Age: a war-diary for artists). The four songs were issued together in 1917. Yet the first performance only took place in 1932—a Frankfurt Radio broadcast conducted by Hans Rosbaud with the soprano Hertha Reinecke, which constituted the last Schoenberg premiere to be given in Germany before the Nazi seizure of power. Thereafter this beautiful and important work, testimony to a new musical language in

the process of realization, has remained one of Schoenberg's most rarely heard creations.

One reason for this is its instrumentation: each song inhabits a different and wholly unique sound-world, and each of the first three songs is composed for a highly unorthodox chamber orchestra, differently constituted in each case. 'Seraphita' demands six clarinets, a trumpet, three trombones, tuba, percussion, and forty-five strings (without violas). The next two songs require ensembles of sixteen and twenty-four instruments respectively, together adding three bass clarinets and quintuple flute and oboe families to the woodwind. Only the last song uses something like a standard symphony orchestra. These specifications are no mere extravagance: the long, ecstatic opening melody of 'Seraphita' owes its tonal plangency to the six unison clarinets. When they fan out into six-part harmony, they invest the music with a memorably dreamlike sonority.

Schoenberg also chose to publish the Op. 22 songs in an innovative form: the music is rationalized onto just a few staves, studded with very full instrumental indications, like a particularly detailed short-score. Though he termed this a 'simplified study- and conducting score' (*Vereinfachte Studier- und Dirigierpartitur*) it actually makes it less easy for a conductor to disentangle individual instrumental parts. During his lifetime this was the only form in which the songs were available; a conventional full score had to await the publication of the posthumous *Sämtliche Werke*.

The texts of Op. 22 are redolent of religious mysticism, spiritual longing and self-abandonment. In this sense they extend the discourse of his Second String Quartet, of the 'air blowing from other planets' and the aspiration towards spiritual union with deity. Op. 22 expresses similar yearnings (the poet of 'Vorgefühl' says he 'can sense the coming winds, and must live within them') in a language that is the reverse of austere, and which should no longer sound abstruse to us. On the contrary, its great warmth and soaring lyricism gives it a very special place in Schoenberg's output.

All four song-texts reflect a supra-denominational exploration of aspects of religious experience: indeed it is possible to view them as a fantastic, efflorescent counterpart to the *Vier ernste Gesänge* of Brahms. Three of the poems are by Rilke, whom Schoenberg had only set once before (in 'Am Strande'); but for the opening song, 'Seraphita', he returned to the poetry of Stefan George. The George text in this case, however, is

not an original poem but a translation of one by the English *fin-de-siècle* poet Ernest Dowson. Behind this Dowson/George ‘Seraphita’—a female spirit with a ‘visionary face’—clearly hovers another: the protagonist of Balzac’s novel of the same name, angel-like and hermaphroditic, who embodies the perfect union of intellect and love, and expounds Emanuel Swedenborg’s spiritual cosmology of a paradise freed from earthly constraints: ‘no up, no down, no left and no right’. Schoenberg had been enormously impressed by the novel, and the colossal choral symphony which he was sketching throughout 1912–14 (and whose finale would evolve into *Die Jakobsleiter*) was intended to give expression to the Swedenborgian vision of paradise—surely one of the imaginative sources of the twelve-tone method.

It is possible that Schoenberg set the Dowson/George ‘Seraphita’ as a kind of study for his symphony, only later deciding to add the Rilke settings. Yet though the clarinet melody at the start of ‘Seraphita’ covers all twelve pitches in its first fourteen notes, none of the Op. 22 Songs is proto-serial in construction (not even ‘Vorgefühl’, written after Schoenberg had sketched his Symphony’s scherzo, which approaches genuine twelve-tone working). Rather they remain freely chromatic, harmonically intuitive and generous in tonal reference. True, they are motivically dense and tightly threaded—in an introduction to their 1932 broadcast Schoenberg observed how ‘Seraphita’ is based on a three-note germinal cell, whose intervals (semitone, minor third) are fixed, although rhythmic articulation, direction and transposition remain entirely free.

Of the three Rilke poems, ‘Alle, welche dich suchen’ (All who seek Thee) already states the central concern of *Moses und Aron*—whereas others want to bind God with images, the poet wishes simply to ‘know you / in the way the Earth knows you’. ‘Mach mich zum Wächter deiner Weiten’ is a prayer (‘Let me be the watchman of your spaces’); while the final song, ‘Vorgefühl’ (Premonition—the same title, and much of the same mood, as the first of the Op. 16 Orchestral Pieces) speaks of someone about to risk all in some overwhelming spiritual experience involving a desperate leap of faith. Somehow the music manages to suggest all these complex spiritual states with extraordinary precision and, indeed, tenderness. ‘Seraphita’ and ‘Vorgefühl’ speak of being swallowed up in a metaphorical sea, and a sense of liquidity (associated with the clarinet timbre) imbues all four songs. Their rhythmic character is subtly

floating, and their colouring fascinatingly iridescent. The vocal writing renounces the broken, recitative-like style of *Erwartung* and the 'speech-song' of *Pierrot lunaire*. The long arching phrases demand superb breath-control as well as a huge vocal range. And, despite the dramatic moments in 'Seraphita' and 'Vorgefuhl', the set as a whole is memorable for some of Schoenberg's most sustainedly lyrical writing. This is a true song-style, and Op. 22 takes its place along with Mahler, Berg and Zemlinsky as one of the key orchestral song-cycles of the early twentieth century.

Only one small set of songs followed, almost twenty years later: the Three Songs for low voice and piano, to poems by the contemporary German poet Jakob Haringer, are the last work of the Berlin period, dating from 1933. Even so, they were not published till after Schoenberg's death, with the misleadingly high opus number 48. In the upheaval of his enforced emigration he had forgotten about the songs, and only discovered them among his papers many years later.

They are twelve-note works, but to the unbiased ear they rank among his most attractive songs. The piano textures are translucent; the vocal lines are if anything more singable than in some earlier sets; and the three distinct moods complement each other admirably. 'Sommermüd' (Summer weariness) is the most lyrical, to a wise, quiet text about counting one's blessings in adversity, for 'many others have had to die without a star'. 'Tot' (Dead—here really in the sense of 'emotionally dead') darkly mirrors a bitter epitaph-like text: 'What does it matter! It's all the same: he had the luck, I didn't.' Lastly, the delightful 'Mädchenlied' shows Schoenberg exercising a vein of contemporary humour akin to that of *Von heute auf morgen*. It's the song of an office-girl afflicted with her own 'Sommermüd'—a nameless boredom of the spirit that makes her contemplate jumping in the river or taking the veil ('It's all the same to me'—in some ways, this poem parodies the other two). The voice-part is beautifully self-pitying in its tearful phrases, while the piano offers a lively, chattering accompaniment.

These rewarding little songs are hardly ever performed—but the same might be said of almost all Schoenberg's output in this field. Yet his songs, if not a central pillar of his achievement, have much to offer singer, accompanist and listener alike; and the continued absence from recital programmes of such jewels as 'Lockung', 'Der Wanderer', 'Jane Grey', 'Am Strande', and 'In diesen Wintertagen' is a matter for regret.



Three Stage Works

LIKE ANY COMPOSER OF HIS TIME AND MILIEU—TURN-OF-THE-
century Vienna—the young Schoenberg had ambitions to write
opera. Moreover, he was consorting with established and successful
composers of opera and operetta, and the burgeoning career of his
then-inseparable friend Zemlinsky, whose first opera *Sarema* won sec-
ond prize in a prestigious competition sponsored by the Regent of
Bavaria, along with a production in Munich in 1897, was a further spur
to action. (Schoenberg is credited in some sources with the author-
ship of the libretto of *Sarema*, but in fact he only prepared part of the
piano reduction.) Certainly the graphic musical invention of *Verklärte
Nacht* and *Pelleas*, and the vast vocal canvas of the *Gurrelieder*, seemed
to promise the imminent arrival of a major operatic talent in post-
Wagnerian, post-Straussian mould. Fragments of libretti, and musical
sketches, indicate operatic projects that briefly brimmed in his imagi-
nation but were set aside for other works. Among these were *Odoaker*
(libretto c. 1900), an apparently strongly Wagnerian conception centred
on the historical figure of Odovacer, the leader of the Germanic (‘bar-
barian’) mercenaries in the service of the Western Roman Empire, who
overthrew the last Roman Emperor in A.D. 476 and made himself King
of Italy. Schoenberg also drafted part of a libretto for a comic opera
based on German folk tales, *Die Schildbürger* (1901: an English equivalent
would be ‘The Men of Gotham’); while a further unfinished libretto,
Aberglaube (Superstition, c. 1901), set among a circle of artists, musicians,

and university students, seems an attempt to combine naturalistic and mystical/erotic elements in a contemporary setting, in a manner reminiscent of the poetry of Dehmel and Hofmannsthal. All these libretti are by Schoenberg himself, but there is also a musical fragment from about 1908 showing that he briefly contemplated an opera based on Gerhart Hauptmann's play *Und Pippa tanzt* (And Pippa dances). Later yet, in 1912, he thought of using Balzac's novel *Seraphita* as the basis of 'a theatre piece'; but this was merely a moment in the shifting conception that led through the projected Choral Symphony of 1912–14 to *Die Jakobsleiter* (discussed in Chapter 14).

Schoenberg's three completed operatic works display three different approaches to the problem of writing for the theatre, and they bespeak a very different sensibility from the more orthodox operatic conceptions glimpsed among these early projects. The first two, *Erwartung* and *Die Glückliche Hand*, set out to create entirely new forms. They are major products of his 'Expressionist' upheaval, the one a freely associative, painful exploration of an individual subconscious mind, the other a highly symbolic representation of the creative artist's existential predicament. The third, a large-scale twelve-note work from his Berlin years, reverts to more traditional theatrical conventions as a 'domestic comedy' opera. His unfinished *Moses und Aron* (discussed in Chapter 14) is also fairly traditional in structure, but in it he can be said to have created a new genre, or re-created a very old one: that of sacred opera.

Something has already been said (see pp. 11–12 and 131) about the nature and significance of the monodrama *Erwartung* (Expectation), Op. 17. It was the furthest point Schoenberg reached in the great creative exploration of 1909—not a point of no return, but one from which the recovery of a sure, negotiable path would be a long and arduous journey. Written at fantastic speed, it was his most intense and sustained foray into the perilous forest of the subconscious mind: that forest which he insisted should be realistically represented on stage, and through which the single character, an unnamed Woman, must make her apprehensive, somnambulistic way, seeking what she most fears. Marie Pappenheim's libretto makes the Woman (soprano) reveal herself involuntarily in an interior monologue, which is partly an imagined dialogue with the absent lover for whom she is searching as the work opens. Past and present merge into one another as fright, longing, jealousy and exaltation, sense impressions

and memory associations, pass through her stream of consciousness. The broken, discontinuous sentences might have been wrung from a patient under psychoanalysis.

Three short scenes trace the Woman's progress through the forest. In the first, she is still on its outskirts, about to take the path that leads into its depths and, she hopes, to her lover. She is clearly in a febrile, overwrought emotional state. In the second scene, she is in the middle of the forest, imagining she hears things or is being attacked. There is no sign of her lover. Startled by a bird, she runs and stumbles against a tree-trunk, which at first she mistakes for a body. Scene III is set in a clearing: the Woman is even more distraught, but she soon plunges back into the forest, calling on her lover to help her. The remainder of the work is occupied by the long fourth scene. The Woman is weary, her dress torn, her hair awry, her face and hands cut and bleeding. In the distance a dark, shuttered house is visible. Again she stumbles—and this time the obstacle is a body, which she soon identifies, with mounting horror, as the still-bloody corpse of her lover.

The shock is a further blow to her doubtful sanity. She embarks on a long 'dialogue' with the man's dead body, imploring him to come back to her, recalling their life together. Suspicious of another woman (perhaps the occupant of the mysterious house?), she throws a tantrum of jealousy and kicks the corpse. Has he really been murdered by the 'other woman'? Or has the Woman on stage done the deed herself some time before, and returned to the scene in demented anguish? The latter implication seems more likely, though in the monodrama's sleepwalker's world an answer is neither forthcoming nor especially important.¹ At the end, the events are already slipping from the Woman's mind: dawn begins to glimmer and, imagining she sees her lover far off, she wanders away saying, 'I was seeking . . .'. Her 'expectation' remains unsatisfied; her tormented quest goes on.

Schoenberg once said that *Erwartung* was a slow-motion representation of a single second of maximum spiritual stress and termed it an 'anxiety-dream' (*Angsttraum*). The phrase should warn us against too literal an interpretation of the lurid details. The 'action' is a purely psychological

¹ In fact, Schoenberg deliberately suppressed the passages in Marie Pappenheim's draft libretto that explicitly support this interpretation.

one, a product of the Woman's fevered imagination. No subject was more perfectly suited to the loosened formal framework and swift juxtaposition of disparate elements that marked his 'totally chromatic' style; and it is generally agreed that in this Representation of (mental) Chaos that style found its most impressive outlet. But a representation is not a transcription. The music itself is not chaotic. There is a willed unity of atmosphere, created through a myriad intensely visualized details, which could only be achieved under iron control. Paradoxically, this is probably the direct result of the spontaneity and intensity with which Schoenberg must have been composing in order to have created the work in such a short space of time. The monodrama possesses no clearly defined structure, ranging so freely and juxtaposing lyricism, violence, and *Angst*-ridden terror in such uncompromising combination that it attains an effect of continuous high-pressure improvisation; yet it combines this with a powerful sense of continuity and tragic inevitability.

That continuity, as I remarked in Chapter 6, is hardly demonstrable in analytical terms: it can only be grasped in performance (and a good performance is a shattering experience), though ultimately it depends on practically every figure in the score. It can indeed be shown that the music proceeds in a series of six great waves, each building to a major climax. It is also true that certain melodic shapes undergo a species of development, an almost protean metamorphosis, throughout the span of the work. Certain key-words in the text, such as 'night', 'moon', and 'blood', provoke recurring musical symbols. But the effect is always of new material, seemingly conjured up by an inexhaustible process of free association.

Schoenberg draws upon his large orchestra in a way that capitalizes upon the instrumental style he had created in his Op. 16 Orchestral Pieces—to secure an unprecedented range of sonorities, virtually every instrument being treated as a soloist. Tone-colours change from bar to bar with amazing fluency; so do the pace and density of texture. The sequence of agitated and static elements combines with a remarkable rhythmic freedom which, graphically portraying every small-scale nervous movement of the principal character, never allows a single tempo or pulse to dominate. The solo vocal line is demanding both in its intensity of expression and its variety—much of it in broken phrases, looking towards the *Sprechstimme* of *Pierrot lunaire*, but also calling for a Valkyrie-like power and stamina at the big moments.

The result is an absence of familiar musical time-sense; a realm without fixed boundaries, in which the unconscious mind roams at will.

Ex. 50

The musical score for Ex. 50 is presented in two systems. The first system includes a vocal line for 'FRAU' with lyrics 'Oh un - ser Gar - ten Die Blu - men für ihn sind sich - er ver -'. The vocal line is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features melodic fragments marked with '(a)' and triplets. The instrumental accompaniment includes Horn (Hn.) marked 'sehr zart', Cello (Celli) marked 'pp', Bassoon (Tbn.), and Basses (Bassi). The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics 'welkt Die Nacht ist so warm'. The instrumental accompaniment includes Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (1 Cl., 2 Ob.), Solo Viola, Solo Violin (Solo Vln.), Harmonic, Solo Cello, Solo Viola, Bassoon (Bsn.), Harp, and Tuba. The score is characterized by its complex, non-linear structure, with overlapping melodic lines and a static element (the *ostinato* in the third bar) that creates a sense of timelessness.

Ex. 50 shows a fairly typical passage from the First Scene. Here we see the snatches of melody, on horn, cellos and flute; the constantly changing colours; a static element (the *ostinato* in the third bar) and the vocal line, seeking to merge elements of recitative and song in a way that owes much to the experience of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*. We can also see some binding elements. *Erwartung* is often called 'athematic'—another nonsense word, as practically every figure in the score is 'thematic' in the sense that it plays a part in maintaining the work's imaginative

continuity. It is true, however, that substantial themes neither recur nor are developed—there is always new material, seemingly conjured up by an inexhaustible process of free association. Yet there has to be something to associate. Some small-scale entities—similar melodic shapes, rhythmically plastic motives, common note-formations, especially at the beginnings of phrases—do run through the monodrama. Their development is not systematic, but they help to create the sense of the work being a single musical organism. They work deeper than thematicism, at an almost subliminal level. (In these terms it might be said, for instance, that Ex. 50 is to a large extent constructed out of the semitone oscillation I have marked *a*.)

Nor is *Erwartung* devoid of calmer moments, though they are invariably short-lived. An expressive horn solo, shortly before the Woman recognizes the dead man as her lover, is one of the places where the legacy of late-Romantic music can still be clearly felt. Another tremulously beautiful passage occurs towards the end in the delicate evocation of the coming of dawn. The music, for a moment, feels as if it may be moving towards the kind of emotional transfiguration common to many Schoenberg works. There is even a brief moment of ‘old-style’ tonality, as the phrase ‘Tausend Menschen ziehn vorüber’ (Thousands pass by), word for word a line from the John Henry McKay poem Schoenberg had set in his 1905 song ‘Am Wegrund’, evokes a direct quotation from that song. But then the Woman hails the imagined apparition of her lover in a climax of grinding dissonance, and in two last ghostly bars of contrary chromatic scales the music simultaneously opens out—perhaps, at last, to external reality—and dissolves, shivering, into nothingness. The nightmare—for us, at least—is over. *Erwartung*, unique in its structure as in the intensity of its emotional involvement, must be ranked among Schoenberg’s most astonishing achievements—which is not to say that time is ever likely to render it less disquieting as a musical experience.

Though shorter than *Erwartung*, Schoenberg’s next stage work, the ‘Drama with Music’, *Die glückliche Hand*,² Op. 18, evolved slowly, over

² The title is practically untranslatable, depending as it does on the fact that *glückliche* can mean either ‘fortunate’, ‘happy’ or ‘fateful’/‘fated’. The standard English translation ‘the Lucky Hand’ (other versions might be ‘The Midas Touch’, or—inconveniently limited to gardening rather than life in general—‘Green Fingers’) is exactly what the work’s protagonist *doesn’t* have.

the years 1910–13. Reverting to the practice of his earliest operatic projects, Schoenberg this time wrote his own libretto. It shows some influences from the later dramas of Strindberg, which he much admired, and the early plays of Kokoschka. A striking feature is the attempted synthesis—in stage performances—of music, movement, and the ‘orchestration’ and ‘colour modulation’ of the lighting (assisted into the foreground by the tendency of the drama, and the characters themselves, towards abstraction). This closely parallels aspects of Wassily Kandinsky’s own contemporary stage piece *Der gelbe Klang* (written about 1909 but not published until 1912), which was once surmised to have been a direct influence on Schoenberg’s work. It is now known, however—since the publication of the Schoenberg–Kandinsky correspondence—that they had conceived this idea independently of one another. ‘It is exactly the same as what I have striven for’, wrote Schoenberg in August 1912, having finally read Kandinsky’s text, ‘... only you go still further than I in the renunciation of any conscious thought, any conventional plot’. Actually he was seeking a new form of *Gesamtkunstwerk*—one in which every element—even the shadows cast by individual rocks in the scenery—could be combined in a completely unified but specifically ‘musical’ conception.

‘I called it, in my own private language, *making music with the media of the stage*’, Schoenberg explained in a lecture in Breslau in 1928 that preceded a production of *Die glückliche Hand* in the theatre there. ‘This kind of art, I don’t know why, has been called Expressionist: it has never expressed more than was *in it*. I also gave it a name, which did not become popular. ... I said that it is the *art of the representation of INNER processes*. But I must not say that loudly, for all that is today despised as Romantic ... people have already incontestably determined that the Age of Romanticism lasted until November 1918, and that everything written up to that time has long since become obsolete. *Die glückliche Hand* ... thus is already very much out of date’.

The things he most desires ever slip from his grasp, and what he experiences instead is ‘The Hand of Fate’. The true fortune which is almost within reach of his fingertips is the other-worldly, the realm of ideas and the spirit, where his strength is greatest but from which he continually turns away, tormented by his longing for success and happiness in the ‘real’ physical world.

The plot of *Die glückliche Hand*, though vestigial, is fairly clearly a symbolic representation of the eternal struggles of any creative artist, and in this regard is certainly infused by a strong autobiographical element. The action is centred on the single figure of an unnamed Man, the only vocal soloist—imbued with creative power, yet unable to establish lasting relationships with others. The other characters are mimed, and a choir of six male and six female voices perform the role of a Greek chorus, commenting on the action in a remarkable vocal texture that combines song and *Sprechstimme*.

The five scenes are symmetrically arranged, the first and last acting as a frame that distances us from the main action. The first is a static tableau: the Man is seen prostrate beneath a huge ‘mythical beast’, a sort of bat-like hyena, with its teeth sunk in his neck—presumably an exteriorization of his own self-lacerating ego. The singing-speaking chorus (only their faces are visible) ask how long he must go on tormenting himself, seeking earthly happiness when he should have faith in a truth that is more than earthly (a partial adumbration of the main theme of *Moses und Aron*). Then the beast vanishes, the Man rises, and in bright sunshine the second scene begins.

The Man is approached by a beautiful young woman; but she soon abandons him in favour of an elegant and prosperous ‘gentleman’; returns for forgiveness; and betrays the Man a second time. The central scene displays the hero’s artistic prowess. He enters a metal-working shop in a mountain ravine, and to the consternation and jealousy of the other artisans (who probably symbolize Schoenberg’s rivals and critics) forges a magnificent diadem at a single hammer-blow. A searing orchestral crescendo leads to the fourth scene: the Man tries to win back his beloved, who has been seduced by the ‘gentleman’, but she eludes him and, to halt his pursuit, pushes a huge boulder down on top of him. The boulder changes into the ‘mythical beast’, and the opera ends with the same tableau as before—the man prostrate, the chorus singing, ‘Did you have to experience again what you have so often experienced? . . . You poor man!’

Thus baldly stated, the action is as unattractive as most symbolic drama. But, in fact, it is inextricably dependent on the music. In *Die glückliche Hand*, Schoenberg was seeking a new form of

Gesamtkunstwerk—one in which every element could be combined in a completely unified but specifically ‘musical’ conception. To this end, he not only wrote his own text: he specified the movements of the characters, the costumes, scenery and lighting in unusual detail, as integral parts of the composition. His opinion (clearly influenced by the theories of Kandinsky) was that it was possible to arrange all these elements to produce an effect akin to the music itself. The clearest demonstration of this is in the use of lighting. In the big crescendo, representing the internal storm of the Man’s emotions, that links the third and fourth scenes, Schoenberg specifies a ‘crescendo’ of light from pitch black, through brown, green, blue-grey, violet, red and orange, to bright yellow. Simultaneously the orchestra increases in volume from *ppp* to *fff*, and each progressive modification of shade is complemented by the entry of a new instrumental colour.

The music of *Die glückliche Hand* is perhaps, at the most basic level, more immediately attractive than *Erwartung*. The scoring, while no less brilliant, is iridescent in contrast to the glooms and lightnings of the earlier work; and much of the material has clearer associations with traditional tonality. It is just as compressed, but the more obviously patterned structure can be grasped on a few hearings; moreover the tempo remains constant over longer periods and rhythmically the music is more clear-cut. There are actual recurrences and developments of themes, and leit-motives to characterize the main characters. Those of the Man and his faithless, unattainable sweetheart are shown as Ex. 51*a* and *b*—note that they are often associated, too, with specific tone-colours, respectively the cellos and a solo violin. Though development of these motives is often wide-ranging, they remain identifiable, as for instance in Ex. 51*c*, the

Ex. 51

(a) (♩ = 48)

Celli

p < >

(b) (♩ = ca. 120)

Solo Vln.

pp

Ex. 51 (continued)



waltz-tune to which the woman enters in Scene 4 after her seduction by the Man's rival.

The quasi-fugal music of the workshop-scene, too, shows a retreat from the dangerous freedom of *Erwartung*. Despite these easily assimilable features, the difficulties and expense of properly staging this twenty-minute opera have rendered *Die glückliche Hand* one of Schoenberg's least performed major compositions.

It was in 1928 that he essayed his third stage work; and like most of his twelve-note compositions this one represented a return to at least superficially more orthodox forms. *Von heute auf morgen* ('From today to tomorrow', or 'From one day to the next') was intended, according to a letter Schoenberg wrote while at work on it, as

a cheerful to gay, even sometimes (I hope at least) comic, opera; not grotesque, not offensive, not political, not religious. The music is as bad as mine always is: that is, appropriate to my intellectual and artistic condition. But it is also appropriate to the subject and therefore continually produces self-contained forms that are interrupted and linked by distinct (but naturally 'non-tonal') recitatives that do not set up to be melodic. There are several ensembles: duets and quartets. (Letter 107)

The libretto of this one-act domestic comedy of marital strife was by 'Max Blonda'—a pseudonym for Gertrud Schoenberg, working in close collaboration with her husband. The plot is said to have been suggested by an incident in the home life of Franz Schreker and his wife.

In the *Satires*, Op. 28, Schoenberg had attacked the irresponsibility of modish modernity in art; *Von heute auf morgen* deflates similar attitudes in life. There is a single scene, set in a modern living-room in the small

hours, and only four singing characters: an 'ordinary' husband and wife (baritone and soprano), and two 'modern, sophisticated' people—the wife's friend (soprano) and 'the celebrated Tenor', a minor Richard Tauber figure.

The couple have met the latter two at a party. On their return home the husband is afflicted with hankering for a different life, one in which he could pay court to the friend, the witty, modern, casual woman of the world who seems such a contrast to his plain, unexciting wife. The wife bears these unflattering comparisons until her patience is exhausted. She suddenly turns the tables on her spouse by transforming herself into precisely the kind of desirable woman he has been talking about. She appears in an eye-catching negligee, pretends she has spent all their money on new clothes, flirts with the famous Tenor over the phone, declares her intention of leaving at once to start looking for lovers (since that is the modern fashion), forces him to have a farewell dance with her and to help her pack, leaving him to look after their small, bewildered child. The discomfited husband is so taken aback and out of his depth that he is only too glad when, as day breaks, his wife ceases her 'dangerous game' and resumes her normal, placid identity. The friend and the Tenor, having spent the night in a nearby bar, come in and try to tempt husband and wife into casual affairs: but without success. The latter recommend to them the virtues of a stable marriage; the advocates of superficiality in relationships leave, shaking their heads over these 'faded stage-characters'; as the curtain comes down the child asks, over the breakfast-table, 'Mummy, what are *modern* people?'

A twelve-note opera is a familiar enough idea: but a twelve-note *comic* opera? *Von heute auf morgen* has seldom been staged, so its success is difficult to judge. At the purely musical level there are no belly-laughs: but it is a very rich score, full of real musical substance yet written with a beautifully deft, light touch. The humour is one of tone—benevolently satirical, with some sharp parodic touches that range from Wagner through Puccini to jazz. In this work Schoenberg augments his orchestra with soprano, alto, tenor and bass saxophones—they are of course the principal means of reference to jazz, as in the syncopated accompaniment to the wife's aria at the beginning of her 'character-transformation': see Ex. 52.

Ex. 52

FRAU

Man will doch schleiss - lich auch sein

dolce
Alto Sax. *sf*

eig - nes Le - - - ben le - - ben

An ensemble of harp, piano, celesta, mandolin, guitar and banjo is also an integral part of the fabric, adding a sharp, 'modern' tang to the sound. Still, the work presents all the difficulties that might be expected of a major Schoenberg score (almost an hour's continuous music) and needs very careful handling to come alive dramatically. It is full, too, of customary contrapuntal subtleties: the husband and wife quarrel, aptly, in a canon by inversion, while the big ensemble for all four characters is a succession of double canons. In a good performance, however, it is by no means a tough score for the listener: it abounds with tonal references, and as a fine illustration of how Schoenberg could be light over serious things, it deserves to be better known. For ultimately it is a celebration of faithfulness in human relationships: of a stable marriage and family life which has meaning, rather than a brittle round of flirtation which has none. Moreover the whole score (composed with obvious enjoyment in a mere two months) was invaluable preparation, at a lower level of intensity, for Schoenberg's finest stage-work, *Moses und Aron*.



Miscellany

THE VARIOUS PIECES DESCRIBED IN THIS CHAPTER ARE A HETEROGENEOUS collection that receive scant notice from most commentators. In general they are regarded as mere footnotes to Schoenberg's main creative work; but in fact they all have intrinsic interest, and help round out the picture of their composer, especially in his lighter moods.

The *Brettli-Lieder*, the eight cabaret songs which helped him secure his post at the Berlin Bunter Theater in 1901, certainly fall into this category.¹ 'Nachtwandler' (Night Wanderer) is for voice, piccolo, trumpet, snare-drum and piano: a bizarre little piece in march-tempo, to a poem by Gustav Falke, its instrumentation probably suggested by the village band that the narrator leads through the moonlit streets. The remaining songs are all for voice and piano. Though of uneven quality they are tuneful and direct in appeal (apart perhaps from the rather dull setting of Wedekind's 'Galathea'). Most display a very Viennese vein of humour, by turns pawky and ironic. Perhaps the best—because most inventive—are two delightful settings of poems by Hugo Salus, both composed on the same day in April 1901. 'The Modest Lover' (who wins his mistress's favour by a somewhat unceremonious treatment of her favourite cat) has an irresistible lilt, and 'simple Song' (about the perils that befall a king who goes for a walk like an ordinary man) is fascinating in its characterization and plodding cross-rhythms.

¹ At least one, *Seit ich so viele Weiber sah*, to a text by Mozart's librettist Emanuel Schikaneder, was originally written for the Viennese Theater 'Zum lieben Augustin'.

This seems the only appropriate place to mention the *Alla Marcia* in E-flat, a tiny march which has been performed as a piano piece, though the manuscript is clearly a short score. All the evidence—especially the harmony—suggests that it is roughly contemporary with the original version of the Second Chamber Symphony and the Second Quartet. With a duration of less than a minute it is merely a chip from the workbench, but a chip of very high-grade timber.

The Three Little Pieces for chamber orchestra, which likewise remained unknown during Schoenberg's lifetime, are equally diminutive. They were written in February 1910, and their expressionistic brevity surpasses even the *Six Little Piano Pieces* Op. 19. They are scored for single woodwind, horn and string quintet, with a celesta and harmonium in the third. The first is twelve bars long, the second merely eight. The third builds up a ghostly, pattering *ostinato* and then breaks off, again at the eighth bar, apparently unfinished—though there is no effect of incompleteness. Like the other two, it is a tight, glinting, self-sufficient aphoristic statement of mood, an odour from the forest of *Erwartung*.

Der eiserne Brigade ('The Iron Brigade')—a spoof march for piano quintet, written for a 'merry evening' in camp during Schoenberg's military service—is of less interest, but real entertainment value. It contains several good musical jokes, and popular regimental melodies are worked into the texture. The ridiculously tuneful Trio opens with a fanfare on the piano, which is later turned into a bugle-call against a 'dramatic' string *tremolo* background. For all this it must be one of the least militaristic marches ever written—if the Good Soldier Schweik had been a composer, he might have produced something like this.

Schoenberg wrote some little pieces of chamber music for himself and his family to play together, usually at Christmas time. The most notable is the exquisite *Weihnachtsmusik* (Christmas music) of 1921, for two violins, cello, harmonium and piano—a five-minute fantasia on two well-known Christmas carols, in an unsullied C major, written with the apparent simplicity of the art that conceals art. The main tune is 'Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen', to which 'Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht' appears as a counterpoint in the delicate flow of string polyphony, while the piano, with carilloning chords, adds a tranquil commentary. Comparatively speaking *Weihnachtsmusik* is a very minor work, but it is an extremely beautiful one, and deserves to be better known.

Schoenberg's most numerous 'occasional' works were canons, vocal or instrumental. Like Bach or Brahms before him, he wrote many of these throughout his career; sometimes simply, one suspects, to keep his hand in with a little 'tonal' composition in the old style, sometimes as riddles or as greetings or presents for friends, often fitted with whimsical texts of his own devising. Those in the 'Appendix' to the *Satires* Op. 28 are typical of the genre. Towards the end of his life Schoenberg began to collect together all those others he thought worthy of publication; and in 1963 his pupil Josef Rufer edited a volume of thirty of them. They vary greatly in quality, from mere workshop ingenuity to miniature compositions of genuine artistic value. Of the latter kind, the following deserve mention: two beautiful four-voice canons (1905) on proverbs by Goethe; a riddle-canon in four keys with a free fifth voice, in celebration of the jubilee of the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam (1928); a canon for Alban Berg's fiftieth birthday, based on motifs from his opera *Lulu* (1935); the two splendid three-voice *Canons for Carl Engel* on his sixtieth birthday (1943) with their fine related tunes and use of double and quadruple augmentation; the elaborately structured, highly chromatic instrumental *Canon for Thomas Mann* (1945); and the last canon Schoenberg completed, in 1949—a four-voice one in a clear C major with a defiant text: 'Centre of gravity of its own solar system, circled by shining satellites, thus your life appears to the admirer.'

The art of transcription, of arranging a work in one medium for another, was close to Schoenberg's heart. His own career as an arranger began with hack-work at the turn of the century, but he came to find it a useful form of compositional relaxation, and it appealed strongly both to his pedagogic and interpretative instincts. Some of his own works came in for this treatment—for instance, he arranged *Verklärte Nacht* and the Second Quartet for string orchestra, the First Chamber Symphony for full orchestra, the Second Chamber Symphony for two pianos—but the bulk of his transcriptions were of other composers' works.

Appendix B lists all those he is known to have made, but is probably not exhaustive; he may have had a hand in many more that appeared under his pupils' names on the programmes of the *Verein für Privataufführungen* (whose constitution specifically encouraged the transcription of orchestral works for chamber ensembles). Schoenberg's arrangements demonstrate the catholicity of his taste. For instance, there is a loving

transcription for chamber ensemble of Reger's *Ein romantische Suite*, undertaken in collaboration with Rudolf Kolisch; three Johann Strauss waltzes, one the famous *Kaiserwalzer* arranged for the same ensemble as *Pierrot Lunaire*; and a delicious version of Luigi Denza's 'Funiculi, funiculà' for clarinet, string trio, guitar and mandolin.²

In a somewhat different category, for they are really original compositions and extremely beautiful ones, come his arrangements of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century German folksongs, of which there are three sets. The first is a group of three for a cappella mixed choir, arranged in early 1929. Four folksong settings for voice and piano soon followed; and as late as 1948 Schoenberg made a fresh set of arrangements for mixed choir, to which he gave the opus number 49. All three song-melodies had appeared in the second 1929 group, and one, 'Es gingen zwei Gespielen gut', must have been a special favourite as it had been used in the first set as well.

Pride of place, however, must go to Schoenberg's orchestrations of Bach and Brahms. In 1922 he arranged two Bach chorale preludes—*Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist* and *Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele*—for large orchestra; and in 1928 did the same with the E-flat Prelude and Fugue (the famous 'St. Anne') which stand at the beginning and end of the Third Part of Bach's *Clavierübung*. He regarded them as popularization—and they have upset purists and delighted ordinary listeners wherever they have been played. *Schmücke dich* is a simple, beautiful setting; the chorale melody is assigned to a solo cello and the string writing is of luminous transparency. However, both here and in the more lively *Komm, Gott*, Schoenberg is at pains to add to Bach's basic text all the particulars in which the Baroque organ was deficient: detailed phrasing and articulation, differentiation of accents and octave registers, contrasts of dynamics and, of course, contrasts of colour. There is some minimal, but appropriate, fleshing-out of the musical fabric.

All these characteristics reappear with increased significance in the big Prelude and Fugue. To bind the two movements into a unity of substance as well as of key, Schoenberg embedded some surreptitious an-

² A transcription for chamber ensemble of Busoni's *Berceuse élégiaque*, widely performed for a while as by Schoenberg, is now known to be the work of Erwin Stein. The transcription of Strauss's *Kaiserwalzer* (1925) weaves in the melody of Haydn's popular 'Emperor's Hymn' which had become the anthem of the Weimar Republic in 1922.

ticipations of the Fugue subject in the Prelude. The gamut of colour—including harp, celesta and glockenspiel, six clarinets of various sizes, and a very agile bass tuba—is brilliantly kaleidoscopic. The instrumentation has a serious purpose, however: it emphasizes structural divisions (the three sections of the Fugue, for instance, begin respectively on woodwind, strings and brass) and, above all, brings out the individual contrapuntal lines. It might be argued, with a certain degree of justice, that Bach did not write these pieces for a medium that allowed such clear definition, and therefore part of their true nature may lie in the very *concealment* of their contrapuntal ingenuity. But Bach's lines are strong enough to survive Schoenberg's own characteristic concern for maximum clarity; and the objection in no way invalidates Schoenberg's creative interpretation of Bach (any more than it does Stokowski's, say, or Elgar's or Respighi's), nor the fine additions to the orchestral repertoire which are the result. Bach himself, the greatest transcriber of them all, would surely have winked approval.

Yet in some ways even more impressive is the superb arrangement for full orchestra which Schoenberg made in 1937 of Brahms's Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25. All his love of Brahms—in whose music he had been steeped for half a century—comes out in this sustained act of creative homage. He called it, jokingly, 'Brahms's Fifth Symphony'. It is not that: chamber music depends on a greater intimacy of expression and shorter-range effects than orchestral music, and it is one of the qualities of Schoenberg's transcription that much of the intimacy is preserved. But it is a masterpiece of orchestral writing, ready-made for popularity. Brahms's original is left almost unaltered—Schoenberg occasionally doubles melodic lines in thirds and slightly refashions the piano cadenza of the last movement (here given mainly to clarinets) but that is all. He is unfailingly resourceful in re-creating the piano figuration in meaningful orchestral terms. The whole *sound* of the work is, at least in the first three movements, uncannily Brahmsian. The sharp-eared will however notice that the brass writing is more chromatic than was Brahms's wont, and the percussion section that emerges in the third movement is a good deal larger than anything to be found in the *Academic Festival Overture*. The best surprises are reserved for the finale. This 'Rondo alla Zingarese', in the original, is one of the fieriest and most

uninhibited of Brahms's 'gypsy' pieces. Schoenberg, tongue firmly in his cheek, goes one better in abandon with his battery of xylophone and glockenspiel and his trombone glissandi. Yet a trio of solo strings is allowed a tender reminiscence of Brahms's own instrumentation just before the breathtaking, helter-skelter coda.

It might seem, at first sight, a small step from these orchestrations to two of the most neglected—and most curious—of Schoenberg's larger works: the Cello Concerto 'after' Monn (1932) and the String Quartet Concerto 'after' Handel (1933). If the Bach orchestrations give purists pain, these are enough to induce heart-failure. They do, indeed, represent an extension of Schoenberg's arranging activities, but a very long extension indeed: no mere transcriptions but drastic recompositions, new pieces founded on another composer's work in much the same way as Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* is founded on tunes by Pergolesi and his contemporaries. In each case the mixture is about twenty-five per cent 'adopted' material and seventy-five per cent 'original' Schoenberg. Quite apart from their own qualities (and they make highly enjoyable listening) they hold a significant position in Schoenberg's *œuvre*: they formed a bridge to his wholly original 'late tonal' works, and provided experience in *concertante* writing that was to benefit him in the Violin Concerto (begun in 1935).

The Cello Concerto is founded on a harpsichord concerto in D minor by one of the 'fathers of the symphony', the eighteenth-century Viennese composer Georg Matthias Monn.³ Pablo Casals had approached Schoenberg for a cello work in 1931, and this 'Monn Concerto' was the result. For reasons unconnected with the work's difficulty—though it is extremely taxing—Casals never played the concerto in public, though he did so in private with piano accompaniment and on one occasion told Roberto Gerhard (who, to judge by his own recollections, cordially loathed the piece!) that he believed this work of Schoenberg had taken cello technique a whole step forward, just as Beethoven's Violin Concerto had done for the violin. The premiere was eventually given in London in

³ This Schoenberg Cello Concerto should not be confused with Monn's own Cello Concerto in G minor, which Schoenberg edited at Guido Adler's request in 1913 for the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich*. His work on that piece involved making a realization of the continuo and also composing four quite extensive cadenzas for a proposed performance by Pablo Casals. The cadenzas remained unpublished until 1977.

December 1935 by the BBC, with Emanuel Feuermann as soloist and Sir Thomas Beecham—an unlikely Schoenberg champion—as conductor.⁴

Perhaps the conservatism of Casals's known tastes influenced Schoenberg's choice of material; but he plainly wrote the whole work with undeniable relish. Each movement starts with a free arrangement of the exposition of Monn's original, but the continuation is wholly Schoenberg's own, in a harmonic style that reaches as far as, and sometimes further than, that of Brahms. He himself described his procedure to Casals in a letter of February 1933:

For the rest, I was mainly intent on removing the defects of the Handelian style, which was also characteristic of the original composition. Just as Mozart did with Handel's *Messiah*, I have got rid of whole handfuls of sequences ('rosalias', 'shoemaker's patches') replacing them with real *substance*. Then I also did my best to deal with the other main defect of the Handelian style, which is that the theme is always best when it first appears and grows steadily more insignificant and trivial in the course of the piece. I think I've succeeded in making the whole thing approximate, say, to Haydn's style. In harmony I have sometimes gone a little (and sometimes rather more) beyond the limits of that style. But nowhere does it go much further than Brahms, and anyway there are no dissonances other than those understood by the older theory of harmony; and: it is nowhere atonal! (Letter 150)

Enthusiasts for the genius of Handel (among whom the present author would like to be numbered) may wish to reflect on the extent to which Schoenberg's creative misunderstanding—as we should charitably call it—of the Baroque master's idioms may have been conditioned by the comparatively limited and unreliable editions of Handel's music available in his time, and his wholly understandable partiality for J. S. Bach, whose significance for the development of his own music was clearly by far the greater. But these matters are irrelevant to an appreciation of the Schoenberg Cello Concerto 'after' Monn.

⁴ Feuermann repeated the work in New York in 1938. Schoenberg was favourably impressed with his performance, and the following year he actually began to compose a second Cello Concerto, intended for Feuermann, based on Bach's Viola da Gamba Sonata in G major, BWV 1027, of which the opening bars exist in meticulously notated full score for solo cello and small orchestra.

Whereas Monn's Harpsichord Concerto is scored only for keyboard, two violins, bass and basso continuo, Schoenberg uses a sizeable orchestra, of at least Classical size in woodwind, brass and strings, plus a trombone, celesta, harp, timpani, and several percussion including glockenspiel. This apparatus is used with wit and vivacity—the Cello Concerto is a work of bright colours and virtuosic orchestration, not to mention the virtuosity required of the soloist, whose cello part, with its rapid bowed passages, double and triple stopping and frequent harmonics, is difficult in the extreme, but always cellistic. The first movement (one of the toughest in cello literature) concentrates on a merry theme which to British ears sounds suspiciously like 'Rule Britannia!'. All three movements are enlarged, the finale substantially. Schoenberg turns Monn's bland little slow movement into a mock-sinister funeral march, while the finale, a lilting minuet, contains a *pizzicato* episode, no doubt in homage to Casals, in which the soloist imitates the sound of a Spanish guitar.

Clearly Schoenberg must have enjoyed himself, for he soon embarked on another work in this vein—the Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra, founded on Handel's Concerto Grosso in B flat, Op. 6 No 7. This time he had the Kolisch Quartet in mind, and the solo parts are accordingly diabolically difficult. Writing the piece seems to have sustained him through his exile in France after leaving Germany—and its unquenchable gaiety is a sign of his resilience of spirit. Op. 6 No. 7 is the only Concerto Grosso of Handel's Op. 6 that does *not* have a string concertino, and this very fact may have guided Schoenberg's choice of it. He may also have been intrigued by the unusual fugal subject of the first *Allegro*, whose initial accelerating repeated note seems to cry out for the impacts of percussion. He employs a rather larger orchestra than in the Cello Concerto (the combination of harp and piano features prominently as a 'continuo' at various points) and extends the range of harmonic 'updating'—the whole work is a treasure-trove of harmonic practice from the early eighteenth to early twentieth centuries.

Given Schoenberg's opinion of 'the Handelian style' as he expressed it to Casals, it is no surprise that his dealings with Handel himself are, on the whole, hardly more respectful than his treatment of Monn. His overall strategy, however, differs from the previous concerto. The first movement is a free arrangement of Handel's original, adding much but following its course and observing its proportions quite closely—except for

the insertion of a fearsome 'cadenza' for string quartet. The lovely slow movement, for muted quartet and small orchestra, is an almost exact, reverential transcription of Handel's (though modulating to a new key in the coda). But in the third and fourth movements, little remains of Handel but the basic tunes—instead we have a lilting, wickedly chromatic *Allegretto grazioso* which in itself is an entire compendium of ways of writing for string quartet for those who like to live dangerously; and finally an outrageous Hornpipe—slower, weightier, more symphonic, but just as uproariously alive as Handel's own—which rises to several big climaxes yet fades away at the end on the sound of the quartet's *tremolandi* and the romantic tones of cellos and horns.

The almost total neglect of these brilliant concertos is unjust and to audiences' loss. It cannot be denied that their humour—and their virtuosity—contain a certain element of the perverse, and their significance for the onward sweep of musical history is negligible. But the tunefulness, high spirits, magnificent craftsmanship and sheer delight in music-making which they display should be enough to ensure them popularity, and they are a better approach than many to the understanding of Schoenberg's more difficult works.



Unfinished Torsos

There is no other great composer in whose oeuvre huge unfinished works play a role as decisive as they do in the oeuvre of Arnold Schoenberg.

—(Jan Maegaard)

AS WE HAVE NOTED ELSEWHERE, SCHOENBERG TENDED TO COMPOSE at great speed; many of his major works came into being in a matter of weeks. But there were others which, for one reason or another, evolved much more slowly over a period of years—such as *Die Glückliche Hand*; or—like the *Gurrelieder*—were worked on at widely separated intervals, with huge gaps between the initial conception and its final realization. Perhaps the most striking example of this is the Second Chamber Symphony, begun in 1906, several times taken up and laid aside until 1917, then only completed in 1939–40. Some important works, however, were *never* brought to completion. Three of them remained after Schoenberg's death as 'torsos'—not fragments or sketches but substantial, performable representatives of his thought which add significantly to our understanding of the man and his creative evolution as a whole. These now remain to be considered.

Central to all three—the oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*, the opera *Moses und Aron* and the *Modern Psalm*—is the idea, or the process, of prayer. Schoenberg was a religious man by temperament as well as conviction—for,

though his forms of belief altered through the years, the innate religious *impulse* seems never to have deserted him, and it affected his whole spiritual and intellectual life. Not only was it a prime source of strength (above all in the lonely years of exploration between 1908 and the evolution of the twelve-note method) to feel some higher justification for his perseverance on his dark and dangerous path. We may also opine that for Schoenberg, with his implacable fighter's ego, to believe in and relate to some power higher than and outside himself was a necessity that helped preserve his psychological balance. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that he saw prayer—the process of relating to the spiritual source—as the fundamental act in religious experience. This is, indeed, the philosophical message of the Second String Quartet. It is, therefore, surely significant that the three ‘torsos’ that remain to be discussed should be unfinished, and yet they are his three major statements of religious belief. The first two, indeed, are by any reckoning among his most important creations.

Die Jakobsleiter (Jacob's Ladder) would, had it been completed, have lasted well over two hours in performance—yet even that huge stretch of music was originally conceived as just the *fourth movement* of the vast religious Choral Symphony on which Schoenberg worked at intervals in the years just preceding the First World War. Eventually he decided to make the oratorio an independent composition, drafted his own text in 1915, and continued to perfect it until, in the summer of 1917, he began writing the music (using some of the Symphony material). He was at the very height of his powers, having by now fully mastered the new language of total chromaticism, and he worked at white-hot speed with his characteristic creative compulsion. He had composed more than half-an-hour's music in short score before his second call-up into the Austrian army—a disastrous hiatus after which, despite attempts up to 1922, he found it impossible to continue the work. It was not just that the tide of inspiration had ebbed: he had progressed stylistically in a direction to which the relatively free language of *Die Jakobsleiter* was fundamentally unsuited. He often spoke of wanting to complete it, and made some important revisions in 1944; but it advanced no further in his lifetime.

In the final months of his life Schoenberg asked his former pupil Karl Rankl if he would undertake the preparation of a full score of the existing

portion of *Die Jakobsleiter*, because he was ‘more familiar with my orchestral style than anyone else’.¹ The proposal clearly lapsed on the composer’s death. Some ten years later, at the behest of Gertrud Schoenberg, it fell to another former pupil, Winfried Zillig, to collate the materials and produce a performing version.

This involved no extra composition on his part: Schoenberg’s short-score is continuous, and Zillig’s task was essentially to translate it into full score, following Schoenberg’s own, sometimes very full, instrumental indications and orchestrating in appropriate style where such instructions were lacking. When the actual musical texture was incomplete he left it so, believing the music strong enough to stand unsupported. He used the fairly standard symphony orchestra which Schoenberg stipulated in 1944—rather than his original 1917 conception, which would have called for an orchestra of 250 (with ten piccolos, eighteen clarinets, and so on), a chorus of 750 plus unseen choirs above and below the stage, as well as four offstage orchestras.

In the form we now have it, *Die Jakobsleiter* is a setting of the first (and shorter) part of Schoenberg’s two-part libretto, up to and including the symphonic interlude which was to have divided the two parts, and now functions adequately as a coda. An urgent, thrusting orchestral prologue (see Ex. 9 in Chapter 6) introduces a vision of a multitude of souls, struggling onward in some limbo between death and reincarnation, urged forward by the archangel Gabriel (bass, partly sung, partly in *Sprechstimme*) who acts as guide and counsellor. His opening injunction, ‘Whether to right or left, forward or backward, uphill or downhill—you must go on, without asking what lies before you’, very much mirrors Schoenberg’s predicament at the time of writing these words, and takes us to the heart of the drama. An extraordinary choral passage ensues, in which various groups of souls—the Dissatisfied, the Doubters, the Rejoicers, the Indifferent, the Resigned—respond to the call in their own way. The choral texture, which mingles song and *Sprechstimme*, is a bold development of a style Schoenberg had first used in *Die glückliche Hand*, and is often divided into as many as twelve parts.

Gabriel summons forward various individual souls who feel that in their life on earth they were able to draw near God. They stand as

¹ Letter 259, 27 June 1951.

different types of humanity. Each makes his profession: first a self-satisfied aesthete, who is roundly rebuked by Gabriel for having no vision; then 'A Protestor', in revolt against both the God of the instincts and the God of organized religion—an attitude which Gabriel condemns as wholly negative; then 'One Wrestling', whose continual struggles with doubt, Gabriel tells him, bring him nearer salvation. 'The Chosen One', the type of the true, inspired artist, now comes forward: he finds himself rejected and humiliated by his fellow men because of the originality of his vision, yet he feels his own humanity and kinship with them, inescapably: 'They are the theme, I the variation.' Next a Monk speaks: he fears to continue in his vocation, for he knows his own weaknesses, and knows he cannot avoid sinning. Gabriel comforts him—he will indeed sin, but sins are punishments that cleanse—now he must go forth and be a prophet and martyr.

In this series of dialogues, the real breadth of language in *Die Jakobsleiter* becomes plain. Despite the proto-serial derivation of material from Ex. 9's opening *ostinato*, each soloist is characterized with almost operatic intensity in music of a different kind, so that the oratorio comes to seem like a compendium of Schoenberg's stylistic discoveries. For instance, the music of the aesthete ('One of the Called') is almost traditionally tonal, the most frankly Wagnerian Schoenberg had written for years. The general musical idiom, however, as typified by that for 'One Wrestling' (see Ex. 53: the text is translated as the epigraph to Chapter 5), relates perhaps most closely to the Op. 22 *Orchestral Songs*, not only in harmony and the extremely wide range of instrumental colour, but also in the sweep of the vocal lines.

Into this purgatorial judgement-scene now breaks a woman's voice: the soul of 'One Dying'. Her monologue begins as rapid *Sprechstimme*, then gradually becomes more melodic as life ebbs away, until, at the point of death, she breaks into true song, an ecstatic wordless vocalise that follows the last words 'the supremely happy dream comes true: To fly! Onward! To the goal!' (the sentiment is very reminiscent of 'Entrückung' from the Second Quartet). As the rapturous song soars up to the dizzy heights of an F *in alt*, the 'Great Symphonic Interlude' begins: quiet, floating music of great beauty and rhythmic freedom, in which the orchestra is joined, not by off-stage orchestras as Schoenberg originally envisaged, but by pre-recorded instrumental groups whose music is

Ex. 53

(Etwas Langsam)
EIN RINGENDER

Wa - rum wird uns kein Sinn ge - ge - ben un - ge - sag - te Ge - set - ze zu ah - nen, kein Au - ge, da zu

6/4 (ORCHESTRA)

sehn, kein Ohr, da zu hö - ren?

MEN'S VOICES

Mm —

pp

broadcast into the hall on loudspeakers. A final reminiscence of the singing soul, duetting with solo violin and distant choir, ends the fragment in far-off, interstellar regions.

Fragment though it is, *Die Jakobsleiter* remains an overwhelmingly impressive creation. The music has enormous dramatic force, which seems to communicate much more immediately at each performance than is the case with many Schoenberg works. This almost in spite of the text, which is no literary miracle—wordy and intimidatingly abstract in style, its philosophic content an original but bleak compilation from Blake, Swedenborg, Strindberg, Schopenhauer, anthroposophy and Hindu mysticism. The character of the ‘Chosen One’ has long been recognized as a Schoenbergian self-portrait, and read in cold print his speeches sound insufferably arrogant. But, in fact, all the characters are partly projections of Schoenberg himself, an examination of his weaknesses and the various stages of his life as a representative human being; and their words are only

meant to come alive in a musical setting. To a great extent they do, and with splendid vividness. Nevertheless, *Die Jakobsleiter* remains a torso: the overall form is unbalanced—after the magnificent choral opening the chorus has relatively little to do, while the five main dialogues with Gabriel, successfully characterized though they are, make the body of the work undeniably episodic.

We lack the second, and what should have been the greater, half—in which it is reasonable to suppose that much material that remains undeveloped in the existing portion would have found its fulfilment. The text for that half is complete, and was in fact published over eighty years ago. In it, the souls who spoke in Part I are being prepared for reincarnation, to return to earth to begin their struggles anew. ‘The Chosen One’ is again prominent in the proceedings. Gabriel has a long final speech in glorification of prayer as the chief means of reconciliation to a God who knows man’s inadequacy. Then the voices of all creatures were to be heard in a great chorus of praise—musically intended as an enlargement and intensification of the ‘symphonic interlude’. Schoenberg noted down his mental impression of it thus: ‘The choir and the soloists join in: at first mainly on the platform, then more and more far off—offstage choirs located next to the offstage orchestras—so that, at the close, music is streaming into the great hall from all sides.’

However regrettable the fact that this mighty ending was never composed, what we have of *Die Jakobsleiter* is a creation of enormous dramatic presence and extraordinary stylistic range, from the neo-Wagnerian music of the Aesthete to the proto-serial twelve-note workings of the opening bars and elsewhere. In the combination of voices—song and *Sprechstimme*, soloists, and chorus—with instruments, the music goes much further than any of the other Expressionist works; and there is a richness of harmony, a yearning warmth of melodic gesture, above all a colouristic radiance of scoring, that make this extraordinary choral fantasia one of the most astonishing and moving products of Schoenberg’s imagination. Its very incompleteness may, in fact, be of the highest significance for its inner expressive meaning. The movement of the individual souls towards reincarnation seems, with hindsight, to parallel the struggles of the twelve-note method, the great organizing principle, to be born out of the multi-directional cosmos of total chromaticism. This was ‘what lay before’ Schoenberg as he composed: *Die Jakobsleiter* was his last step on that road—a fantastic

musical vision of the metaphysical process of Becoming, expressed in a language equally pregnant with a new birth.

Schoenberg's second main religious statement in music, and the most important product of his full maturity, is the opera *Moses und Aron*, written between 1930 and 1932 to a libretto drafted in 1928. It might be viewed as a sequel to *Die Jakobsleiter*, in that it portrays the difficulties experienced by a 'chosen one' in accomplishing his prophetic mission. It also relates closely to *Der biblische Weg* (The Biblical Way), the play on which Schoenberg worked in 1926–7. There the protagonist, Max Aruns, seeks to found a new Jewish homeland in twentieth-century Africa but is defeated because his own human weakness cannot sustain his vision. In *Moses und Aron* Schoenberg goes back to the original search for the Promised Land and presents the contending impulses in the two opposing brothers, the prophet and the preacher. Unlike *Die Jakobsleiter*, however, the work is to all intents and purposes complete, even though the music for the short third act was never composed. And the result is unique in the annals of opera—a 'philosophical' work about the incommunicability of the nature of God, which is yet vividly dramatic in its impact and contains some of Schoenberg's finest and most immediately communicating music. In fact it could well be said that in the story of Moses and Aaron Schoenberg has composed a three-dimensional, theatrical dramatization of his life-long pursuit of the *Gedanke*: the timeless, pre-existent, revelatory musical Idea which is the inner essence and meaning of a great work of art and also the object of contemplation through which the music raises us—composer and listeners alike—to a higher level of spiritual awareness.

In the first scene of Act I the Voice of God (six solo singers, reinforced by speaking chorus) calls to Moses from the Burning Bush. His first words of reply, in the halting *Sprechstimme* that characterizes all his utterances, sums up his whole problem: 'Only one, infinite, thou omnipresent one, unperceived and inconceivable God!' (see Ex. 54). The Voice appoints Moses to be God's prophet, although he protests that no one will believe him, for he lacks the ability to express what he knows. He is told that his brother will speak for him and that Israel is God's chosen people. In Scene 2, Aaron and Moses meet in the wasteland, and their respective characters are made clear. Aaron (an agile, lyrical high tenor) is silver-tongued, quick to grasp the externals of Moses'

Ex. 54

Sehr langsam (♩ = 48) möglichst langsam

O MOSES 3 3

4 *ppp* etc. Ein - zi-ger, E - wi-ger
4 SIX SOLO VOICES

ORCH.

3 5 3 5

all-ge-gen war-ti-ger un-sicht barer und un - vor-stell-bar-er Gott!

The musical score is for a scene featuring six solo voices and an orchestra. The tempo is marked 'Sehr langsam' (♩ = 48) and 'möglichst langsam'. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The vocal parts are for O, MOSES, and a group of six solo voices. The orchestral part is marked 'ORCH.'. The lyrics are in German. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, quintuplets, and dynamic markings like 'ppp' and 'etc.'.

conception and able to interpret it in more easily presentable terms—he thinks through images and words, and of a God who punishes and rewards. Moses, the deep thinker, is so concerned to speak the exact truth, rather than an easy approximation, that he can hardly speak at all: his dogged *Sprechstimme*, reiterating the reality of the omnipresent God whom no image can properly represent, makes an uncouth contrast to Aaron's florid arioso, but an effective one, cutting through the fine-sounding phrases with greater clarity than any singing line.

Moses and Aaron go together to the Israelites, who in Scene 3 are shown divided and demoralized under the Egyptian oppression, yet eager for a new god to lead them from slavery. Apart from the two brothers, the people *en masse* are the opera's other main character: fickle, unstable, slow of understanding, yet with the potential to develop into a great nation. In Scene 4 Moses tries to deliver his message to them, but his simple proclamation that one mighty, invisible, unimaginable God requires their devotion meets with hostility and derision. Moses despairs—but Aaron seizes the initiative and performs three miracles, changing Moses' rod into

a serpent, curing Moses' leprous arm, changing Nile water into blood. Faced with these demonstrations of divine power, though still untouched by the central idea, the mob's attitude alters completely; they put themselves under Moses' and Aaron's guidance and, singing a hymn of fervent nationalism ('Almighty, thou art stronger than Egyptian gods are, Thou wilt strike down Pharaoh and all his servants'), make ready to march out of Egypt.

Act II (after an interlude, a whispered canonic chorus 'Where is Moses?') takes place before the Mountain of Revelation. Moses has been away praying on the mountain for forty days and the people have grown restive, afraid and violent. They think Moses' God must have killed him, and want their old gods back. Aaron, to escape their wrath, gives in, and stills their fears by presenting them with a new god—the image of the golden calf. 'Revere yourselves in this gold symbol!' he says. Now follows the work's most notorious—and exciting—scene, the 'Dances round the golden calf'. The preliminary rejoicing and merrymaking soon degenerate into all the excesses of which man is capable when freed from the claims of the divine idea. Human sacrifice, fighting, murder of dissidents, suicide, rape and total destruction ensue. Moses returns, bearing the Tables of the Law, just as the people are groggily recovering from their communal hangover. He makes the golden calf vanish with a word and rounds angrily on Aaron. The final scene presents their argument. Aaron defends himself skilfully: he acceded to the people's demands out of love for them; if Moses refuses to compromise, the people are never going to understand even a fraction of the truth. The Tables of Law—they, too, are an image, a simplification of the idea. In despair, Moses breaks the tablets, and is chided by Aaron for faint-heartedness. A pillar of fire springs up; the Israelites, seduced back to God by yet another image, march on into the wilderness, singing their hymn, while Moses sinks down, in defeat: 'Unimaginable God, inexpressible thought of many meanings! So I am defeated! So everything I thought was madness and cannot and must not be spoken. Oh word, oh word that I lack!' The only hint of consolation is in the violins' long, poignant, independent monody, one of Schoenberg's most magnificent melodic creations, which has all the expressive power that Moses is denied, and seems to say all he would want to say (Ex. 55).

Ex. 55

Tempo di marcia (♩ = 112)

MOSÉS

Un-vor-stell-bar-er Gott!

Vlns.

p *fp* *ff*

Un-aus-sprech-lich-er, viel-de-ti-ger Ge-dan-ke!

Lässt du

die-se Aus-le-gung zu? Darf A-ron, mein Mund, dies-es Bild machen?

p *mp* *f*

So ha-be Ich mir ein Bild ge-macht, falsch wie ein Bild nur sein kam!

ff

Ex. 55 (continued)

So bin Ich ge-schla-gen! So war al-les Wahn sinn, was ich ge-

3 5 5

f *ff*

dacht ha-be und kann und darf nicht ge-

a tempo

3 3

f *ff*

Strings & Woodwind *rit.*

(So rasch als möglich) 3

C.Bsn., Tuba, Bassi *f*

sagt wer-den! **Langsamer** O Wort, du

3 3

f *ff*

(Vlns.) *p cresc.* *fp*

Wort, das mir fehlt!

3

p *f* *pp*

Act III was never composed, apart from a few sketches. The text, however, is complete: it consists of a single scene, another debate between the brothers. This time Moses has regained the ascendancy: Aaron, in chains, is castigated for having ‘betrayed God to the gods, the idea to images, this chosen folk to others, the extraordinary to the common-place’. Aaron is set free, but, since he is only able to live in the images he creates, he falls dead. Moses tells the people that they will remain in the wilderness, for only there can they attain union with God.

On the whole, one does not regret that this Act was never set to music: unlike the rest of the libretto, it seems to lack dramatic conviction. There is no explanation of how Moses has gained the upper hand, nor why his arguments should triumph now when they failed before. It reads just a little like the wish-fulfilment of a man who really knew that Aaron, whether right or wrong, inevitably gets the better of the arguments in this life. And indeed as Schoenberg depicts him in music Aaron, for all his pliancy and shallowness, is not an unimpressive character: he has quick wit, acts with decision, and is an artist with words. The opera, in truth, is as much about the artist as the religious man—the struggle, and the paradox, involved in trying to give outward expression to any inner vision. Schoenberg had to have something of Aaron in his own makeup to attempt the opera—for is not *Moses und Aron* itself an ‘image’ such as Moses would condemn—an ‘image’ which by its very existence betrays the idea it tries to convey? If so, its incompleteness saves it: for the final revelation of Moses’ triumph and unity with God is left unexpressed, and the torso that we have portrays the essence of the graspable, believable, human situation.

Subconsciously, Schoenberg must have realized this, for the two acts of *Moses und Aron* form a complete musical and dramatic unity. They also comprise one of his greatest achievements. Leitmotives are few: instead Schoenberg weaves a continuously fluctuating texture of remarkable orchestral brilliance, in which spoken recitative, arioso, ensembles and large-scale choral passages succeed one another with unerring dramatic flair. In two hours’ music only a single note-row is employed, and the work emerges as a grand summing-up of all the different expressive possibilities of twelve-note music. One thinks of the unearthly stillness of the scene before the Burning Bush, followed by the suave, elegant yet insubstantial dance-like music for flute, violins and harp that characterizes Aaron on

his first appearance. Then there is the polyphonic energy of the big choruses, which convey joy, fear, mockery or triumph in counterpoint of a rhythmic fluidity and grandeur that go far beyond anything Schoenberg had previously achieved in this field. Or there is the mysterious, questioning, half-whispered, half-sung chorus in double canon that forms the interlude between the two acts; the intensity of the debate between Moses and Aaron, and the tragic eloquence of the ending.

But perhaps most compelling of all is the great central scene of Act II, the 'Dances round the Golden Calf', in which the orchestra takes the leading role. For sustained rhythmic force and dynamic, barbaric energy it stands alone in Schoenberg's *œuvre*: a five-movement dance-symphony, or a 130-bar complex of themes with four large-scale variations, of nearly half an hour's length. This music is full of vivid strokes: the ponderous fanfares that begin it, the militaristic march of the Ephraimites, the dance of the butchers, into which Schoenberg introduces the open-air sound of violins fiddling on open strings as background to a leaping, mercurial theme:

Ex. 56

Rascher (♩ = 160)

2 Mandolins, Pno., Hrp., Xyl., Celesta

Vlins., Vlas. → (strings continue)

etc.

Moreover, there is the at first innocent, slightly befogged waltz that accompanies the orgy of drunkenness; and the violent disintegration and frenzied rhythms that accompany the scenes of mass destruction and suicide. In its sheer ferocity and propulsive power this whole vast sequence seems to me to stand in the annals of twentieth-century music on a par with *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Indeed it perhaps deserves to be ranked higher than Stravinsky's piece, for it is not so hermetic: it is placed in a dramatic context where its violence can be seen as only part of the story—but

a vital part, disregarded at peril—of the nature of mankind. For it is at the human level, as a tragedy of any real seeker after truth, that *Moses und Aron* evokes a response from those who may not share its religious convictions.

In the last year of his life, Schoenberg again returned to the problem of presenting a comprehensive religious statement in music, with his series of *Modern Psalms*—or, as he described them in a letter to Oskar Adler, ‘Psalms, Prayers and other Conversations with and about God . . . our contemporaries’ religious problems’.² He originally entitled the first of these prose texts in German (some of which are only unpolished drafts) ‘Der 151. Psalm’, indicating that he thought of himself as adding to the biblical series of 150 psalms in a contemporary context. He wrote fifteen of them, and began a sixteenth only ten days before his death.³ Presumably they were all intended for musical setting, but he only essayed the composition of the first, and did not complete it.

The extant psalm-texts show a great range of subject-matter. If they have a common theme, it seems to be the question, ‘What attitude should a Jew, or any religious man, adopt towards moral and spiritual matters in the modern world?’ One psalm examines the role of prayer in the machine age; another celebrates the Jews as the ‘Chosen People’ and defends them from charges of arrogance; another is an attack on atheism engendered by a blind belief in the power of science; another approves the moral force of the Ten Commandments. The most substantial text, virtually a short essay, is an examination of the character of Jesus—Schoenberg concludes that in minimizing his importance Jewish history has made a grave error. Yet others treat of sexual love, the innocence of children, the atomic bomb, and prayer as an expression of humility. The fragment of the sixteenth psalm condemns ‘National inbreeding, national incest’ as ‘just as dangerous to the race as that of the family and the tribe’.

To this miscellaneous collection the first psalm stands as prologue and invocation—a prayer to God from one who asks if God attaches any

² Letter 256, 3 March 1951. Adler, with whom Schoenberg had recently re-established contact after the hiatus of war and exile, had sent him a copy of his *Das Testament der Astrologie*.

³ We should perhaps also include the English text for *Israel Exists Again*, written one year previously in 1949. All that Schoenberg completed of this work for chorus and orchestra was a promising looking fifty-five-bar fragment, chiefly a declamatory prelude with a prominent piano part.

significance to whether he prays or not. The words strongly recall Moses before the Burning Bush: 'I am . . . speaking of the only, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient and unimaginable, of whom I neither can, nor should, create an image.' Schoenberg began to set this text to music, as his *Modern Psalm*, Op. 50c, late in 1950, scoring it for speaker, chorus and small orchestra. The setting remained a fragment of some five minutes' length, which probably represents about three-quarters of the whole. Stylistically the music is wholly characteristic of Schoenberg's last period, having something of the dramatic agitation of *De Profundis* but also the underlying calm apparent in the String Trio and *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*.

Texturally this work seems the ultimate in lucidity of his still-evolving twelve-note language. The speaker (in the rhythmically formalized but tonally free *Sprechstimme* Schoenberg had developed in his later years) acts as a kind of precentor, giving out each paragraph of the text before the chorus sing it, usually in graceful canonic textures, against an orchestral background of notable translucency. But the final section of the text, which speaks of prayer as itself a rapture 'greater than any fulfilment', leading, finally, to union with God, was not set—the fragment breaks off in mid-sentence, with the sopranos singing 'And nevertheless I pray . . .' (see Ex. 57; p. 300). Here, again, the incompleteness is somehow artistically satisfying, its open-endedness expressing the yearning, rather than the achievement. Perhaps Schoenberg sensed this, for in the last months of his life he made no attempt to return to the unfinished score. Like *Die Jakobsleiter* and *Moses und Aron*, the *Modern Psalm* stands as a noble monument to Schoenberg's religious longings, rather than an unanswerable statement of faith.



... and Idea

Now do you grant the power which

Idea has over both word and image?

—(Moses in *Moses und Aron*, Act 2)

I venture to credit myself with having written truly new music

which, being based on tradition, is destined to become tradition.

—('National Music', 1934)

IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTERS I HAVE TREATED IT AS AXIOMATIC that Schoenberg's music possesses a significance beyond the sum of its note-rows and counterpoints; that it is no abstract number-game but—in Schoenberg's own phrase—the presentation of an idea. But what idea? Insofar as music has a dialectical or philosophical content beyond its architectural forms, what does Schoenberg's music *say* to us?

By its very nature, this content is not easily verbalized. Schoenberg rather presents us—through music's progress in time, and through its continual variations and developments, with a recurring pattern of experience. He did, however, once give a verbal clue to that pattern. The American jazz and classical pianist Oscar Levant considered performing Schoenberg's Piano Concerto. To help Levant approach the work, the composer noted down 'a few explanatory phrases' to characterize the work's four sections:

Life was so easy
 Suddenly hatred broke out
 A grave situation was created
 But life goes on.

At the simplest level, that is a fair summary of the Concerto's emotional progression. The same 'programme' might apply with little modification to several classical and romantic pieces. But the listener who explores Schoenberg's output in any kind of breadth or depth soon becomes aware that a very large proportion of his works, from all periods of his career, seem to embody different forms of the same experiential pattern.

We encountered one form of it at the very beginning of this book, in String Quartet No. 2; and we may adduce further, varied examples. The *Gurrelieder*, in its comparatively simple late-Romantic manner, charts the decline of a *Tristan*-esque love affair into the spiritual abysses of death, blasphemy and ghost-life; but the phantasms are eventually dispelled by the summer breezes, and the final melodrama and chorus exhort us to greet the daylight and reawakening life. *Pierrot Lunaire* indulges in risky sport with ludicrous images of decay and grotesquerie until real violence and madness invade the music; but at length they recede, the air clears, and at the end we stand once more in daylight and breathe 'the ancient scent of far-off days'. In *A Survivor from Warsaw* violence and madness are confronted in an actual contemporary situation, in the ultimate nihilism of which twentieth-century man proved capable—but that nihilism is denied its final victory because the victims elect to stand and sing together, affirming their humanity and subverting the hell's logic of the gas-chamber.

The lineaments of the pattern grow clearer. It is no crudely optimistic one. The music explores extremes of emotional experience, in the cause not of sensationalism but of self-knowledge: to help us see clearly. And when clarification comes its effect, however high the price, tends naturally to be affirmative. This is plainly the case in the earlier works, where 'clarification' is associated with orthodox tonal resolution, as in the grand C major conclusion of the *Gurrelieder*, the shimmering D major of the sextet's 'Transfigured Night', or the warm, tranquil D major epilogue that fulfils all the chromatic strivings of the First String Quartet. Later the affirmation takes other forms, though often—as in the *Ode to Napoleon*,

the Piano Concerto, the *Genesis* Prelude and the String Trio—these include at least an implicit acknowledgment of tonal roots.

In fact, had there been less discussion of the syntactical construction of Schoenberg's music, and more of what it says, people might more readily have noticed what an essentially positive composer he is. There is no trace in his music of the post-Wagnerian 'death wish' that infected so many of his contemporaries, and can even be traced in the music of younger men like Berg. He explored horror and disorientation because he believed they could not be effectively rejected and transcended until they had been fully known. 'Clarification' abounds, on every level, whether as form emerging out of amorphousness (*Genesis* Prelude) or the strengthening of marital ties by putting mutual affection to the test (*Von heute auf Morgen*). Far from encouraging morbidity, hardly any Schoenberg work has a tragic or truly depressing ending. Even *Erwartung* and *Die glückliche Hand*: the predicaments of their respective protagonists are hopeless indeed, but we do not identify with them—instead the action, like a case-history, works through and makes those predicaments understandable, and in so doing clarifies something in ourselves. *Moses und Aron* ends at a tragic juncture, but that was not Schoenberg's ultimate intention. Perhaps only the Second Chamber Symphony ends in utter darkness, and even here we know that he considered adding a more affirmative third movement. But as it stands, the effect on the listener is hardly depressing—rather cathartic.

Certainly many works do not, and ought not to be made to, fit this pattern of clarification through extreme emotional, spiritual or psychological experience. But several embody individual stages in the process, depending when they were written; and as a result we begin to see that the pattern must be in some senses an autobiographical one. The music of Schoenberg's earliest period—not only the most ebullient pieces such as the D major Quartet and the First Chamber Symphony—has something of the 'life was so easy' feeling about it; this is, at least, the work of an extraordinarily gifted young man confidently extending a tradition of which he feels a part and rather relishing his forward position in it. Then 'hatred breaks out': the personal and spiritual crises of the years 1908–9 release disruptive forces which can only be caught and held in the first totally chromatic works—traditional musical architecture and large-scale forms become, for a time, impossible, with consequent personal

disorientation. The 'serious situation' thus created necessitates years of painful searching for a way forward; and when 'life goes on', it does so by clarifying the chromatic content of the disruptive elements through the twelve-note method. The 'classical' twelve-note works—such as the Wind Quintet, Orchestral Variations, and Third and Fourth quartets—represent clarification achieved. But at a price: the traumatic events of previous years are implicit in them, as witness the Op. 29 Suite, whose genuine gaiety of spirit dances on a razor's edge between order and disorder. In Schoenberg's last fifteen years, the whole pattern seems to be repeated. Perhaps under the influence of events in Europe, the dark forces erupt again—strangely enough in *tonal* or near-tonal works, the Second Chamber Symphony, *Variations on a Recitative* and *Ode to Napoleon*. But now he has better weapons with which to meet the crisis. Three very different twelve-note works—the Piano Concerto, String Trio and *A Survivor from Warsaw*, seem to be his most concise and positive embodiments of the whole process. Yet in his last music the struggle for some ultimate resolution is still going on.

For Schoenberg, that 'ultimate resolution' had to be religious. To the religious temperament, Unity with God is the supreme clarification, and in this world can only be secured by prayer. Its realization is implicit in three works. The Second Quartet, here as in other respects a document of cardinal importance, *enacts* that religious ideal—the prayer from the depths in the third movement motivates the interplanetary ascent in the finale of one who becomes 'an ember of the Holy Fire . . . an echo of the Holy Voice'. *Herzgewächse* compresses a similar upward movement into three minutes' span: as the text speaks of heartfelt prayer rising to God so does the vocal line soar clear of its accompaniment, higher and higher till it pinnacles softly on an F natural *in alt*, a sound so high and rare that it seems free of all earthly associations. The fragment of *Die Jakobsleiter* breaks off on that same sound, with the voice of the 'Dying One'. But there Schoenberg had intended to go further and actually compose a hymn of Union with God. He went on trying: prayer was a vital escape from the subjectivity of his egocentric temperament, necessary for his own spiritual and emotional clarification. The twelve-note method achieves this for him in the formal sphere, as a means of objectifying and disciplining the riotous inventions of his subjective consciousness. But he never found himself able to compose the explicit

music of union with the divine. Of his last choral trilogy, Op. 50, *Dreimal Tausend Jahre* is a far-off glimpse, in the mind's eye, of a Promised Land which Schoenberg, like Moses, was destined never to enter. Yet *De Profundis* and the *Modern Psalm* are dramatic presentations of the act of prayer, against all odds: the music never gives up hope.

Schoenberg, then, was essentially a religious composer. I mean that in the widest sense. He set comparatively few religious texts until late in his career, and those mainly from the Jewish traditions, though in earlier works such as *Friede auf Erden* and indeed *Die Jakobsleiter* religious issues are approached more from a Protestant point of view. Such pieces as *Dreimal tausend Jahre* or, especially, the projected series of *Modern Psalms* are directed principally at the Jewish community. Nevertheless the religious orientation of these and other works largely transcends sectarian boundaries, as befits an artist who was deeply influenced by the mystical Christianity of Swedenborg and Blake. Almost all Schoenberg's vocal works deal in some fashion with the relation of the individual to the inner and outer worlds—to the spirit and to the collective, to humanity at large and, beyond that, to the yet larger, eternal world of religious conviction and speculation. Ultimately all this is subsumed in the idea of relationship to God, even if that God is apparently absent, or an ungraspable ideal.

In this sense not only *Kol Nidrei* and *De Profundis* but also *Erwartung*, *Die Glückliche Hand*, *Jakobsleiter*, *Moses und Aron*, even *A Survivor from Warsaw* are religious works, each with its place on an angelic ladder that stretches from Hell (*Erwartung*) to the celestial Nirvana vouchsafed to the dying Soul in *Jakobsleiter*, or the spiritual victory in Hell achieved by the Holocaust victims at the end of *A Survivor from Warsaw*. Schoenberg would have placed far more importance on this aspect of his work, than on his intellectual achievements as a constructor of systems. In his music he sought to reassert the traditional romantic and religious values of European civilization. In this sense, he was a conservative composer.

But because such a reassertion was not just aesthetic but ethical in intention, it inevitably involved an attack on the bogus traditionalism and intellectual inertia of the decaying society in which he found himself; and in this sense his approach was a critical, even revolutionary one. It is the approach advocated by Moses in *Moses und Aron*; in the one passage that he is given to *sing* rather than *speak*, he exhorts his brother:

Purify your thinking,
Renounce what is worthless,
Make it truthful.

To seek the truths enshrined in tradition and state them anew, freed from unnecessary or obscuring associations—that was Schoenberg's aim; and since the truly essential only reveals itself in extreme situations, the search rapidly carried him into strange and perilous regions. So strange, that at first very few listeners understood the music that resulted, and his dedicated attempts at clarification paradoxically brought confusion in their train.

When the society of which Schoenberg's early music had been an implied critique was mortally wounded, if not quite over-thrown, by the holocaust of World War I, there was no lack of 'iconoclastic' *avant-gardists* in the arts to condemn the real qualities of that society and its traditions, no less than its failures and hypocrisies. That had never been Schoenberg's intention; he wished to revitalize tradition, not break with it. So since the twelve-note method provided a way of acknowledging and applying his 'revolutionary' stylistic advances, he was able to exercise his 'conservative' instincts in building a whole network of links to the music of the past. Baroque dance-forms, classical variation-forms and sonata-like frameworks; rhythmic structures and melodies never entirely divorced from the vernacular of the Viennese masters; a largely familiar range of register, articulation and flow; reminiscences of traditional tonality; even tonality itself. From this point of view, the most 'revolutionary' gesture in one of his most extreme works—the String Trio—is not the fifty-bar flood of trills, stabbing chords, shrieking dissonances, harmonics, *glissandi* and *col legno*, *ponticello* effects with which it begins, but the calm bars of pure unsullied A major that follow. Or rather, what is 'revolutionary' is the idea that both passages are necessary parts of the same musical world. Schoenberg seems to have felt that he had transformed the musical language only insofar as the human body is healthily transformed several times in an average lifetime by the death and replacement of its every individual cell, so that we become different flesh, but remain the same person.

Here again his attempt at clarification failed, at least in the short term. Twelve-note music, as is notorious, is important because it uses twelve

notes. It was Schoenberg's serial practices that attracted, and still attract, most attention and comment, just as if the beauty of a face were to be judged by examining the structure of the grinning skull beneath. Yet the method's whole *raison d'être*—the emotional and intellectual circumstances in which a composer may find it a necessary path along which to proceed—were hardly discussed or comprehended. The music's traditional features, on the other hand, tend to be played down, and indeed rather offend the sensibilities of many commentators. Schoenberg, they feel, failed to recognize the potential of his own discoveries—he should have gone on to create new forms which spring direct from the seed of the note-row itself, as (so the story goes) Webern did. Such thinking was the origin—with an almost accidental input from Olivier Messiaen—of the 'total serialism' of Goeyvaerts, Boulez, Stockhausen, and others in the early 1950s. But Schoenberg's forms are neither old-fashioned nor new-fangled: they are simply those he felt most valid within his conception of the twelve-note method. 'Total serialism' would hardly have aroused his sympathy.

Nor might he have supported the view that what he had done offered the 'only way forward' for Western music. Indeed, we know he rejected the proposition as it was stated in Adorno's *Philosophie der Neuen Musik*. It could hardly have been a tenable opinion for a man who expressed admiration for composers as diverse as Bartók, Gershwin, Ives, Milhaud, Shostakovich, and Sibelius; a man who declared that much good music was still to be written in C major (and wrote some of it himself), who saw many as yet unexplored possibilities between traditional tonality and serialism. Of course he had a strong pride in his own achievement, and attached great importance to it. But in any grave situation there are potentially as many ways forward as there are thinking men to take them.

Consider, for instance, the path trodden—in what seems a diametrically opposed direction—by a man of very similar racial and cultural background. Kurt Weill was a lesser composer than Schoenberg; but he, too, in his own way, attempted to revitalize the Austro-German musical tradition through a critique of its forms and idioms. The differences between two masterpieces which preserve that tradition such as Weill's Second Symphony and Schoenberg's Third Quartet are ones of means and personality, not of intention or achievement. And Weill's case should give us cause for thought: *he* cultivated a deliberately accessible musical

language—yet his finest works, such as the Symphony and the opera *Die Bürgschaft*, are quite as little known as Schoenberg's. To argue against the latter's music simply because of its difficulty must be to beg at least part of the question. Just as to argue for and about it (as so many seem to) merely from some nineteenth-century historicist notion of cultural 'progress', or a late-twentieth-century postmodernist one of cultural 'elitism', must be to miss most of the point.

What, then, is the significance of Schoenberg's works—if we lift them clear of their 'historically inevitable' reputation, of misunderstanding or analytical obfuscation? Well: they may bewilder, satisfy or annoy, according to individual taste; they may be disliked, warily respected, or simply loved. But no one can afford to remain indifferent to them, for they raise questions at so many different levels, challenge preconceptions, force us to think, to find reasons for loving or hating them. With their graphic exploration of emotional extremes, their will towards clarification and refusal to entirely despair, they chart a passionate man's twentieth-century pilgrimage and remain, as all life-works should, the last repository of essential information about their creator. They render a complex world and a complex human being as they deserve—complexly. Through them, Schoenberg is seen to embody the ethic of the dedicated artist, in its most uncompromising form.

Epilogue

Maybe something has been achieved but it was not I who deserves the credit for that. The credit must be given to my opponents. They were the ones who really helped me.

—(Message to the American Institute of Arts and Letters, 1947)

ON HIS HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1974, ARNOLD Schoenberg did, in a sense, come home to Vienna. In the course of a centenary congress on his life and work held in his native city, the composer's ashes and those of his second wife Gertrud were re-interred in a grave on the Zentralfriedhof, near the memorials to Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, while a choir sang, in Hebrew, the chorus *De Profundis*. The event was symbolic of the recognition of his achievement that had come about since his death.

Ever since 1966, a handsome and scholarly Complete Edition of his works has been in publication, with supplementary volumes and commentaries. Begun under the guidance of such old associates as Rudolf Kolisch, Josef Rufer, Leonard Stein, and Eduard Steuermann, it has grown to engross the energies of later generations of Schoenberg scholars, notably Reinhold Brinkmann, Rudolf Stefan, and Christian Martin Schmidt. In the Vienna suburb of Mödling, the apartment in Bernhardgasse 6 where Schoenberg lived from 1919 to 1925 is now a historical monument, property of the International Schoenberg Society founded in 1972. It was renovated as a permanent museum in 1999. In 1973, the University of Southern California out-bid the University of Michigan for Schoenberg's personal legacy of music, paintings, writings, letters and other effects and housed it in the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, a specially designed Bauhaus-style building containing a classroom, a library, an archival vault, a concert hall and exhibition space plus a replica of the composer's Brentwood studio. As the single most comprehensive

collection of any twentieth-century composer in the world, for twenty years the Institute was a magnet for students and researchers, and published its own *Journal*, illuminating countless aspects of Schoenberg's life, work, and circle.

Since then Schoenberg has returned to Vienna in another sense. In the mid-1990s a legal dispute arose between USC and Schoenberg's three surviving children over the University's desire to make use of the Institute building for activities unrelated to Schoenberg. After two years of suit and counter-suit, by mutual agreement the University gained control of the building and the Schoenberg heirs removed the archive from USC. In 1998 it was relocated to his native city in a new and well-appointed Arnold Schönberg Centre on the Schwarzenbergplatz, near to the Musikverein where *Pelleas und Melisande* and the *Gurrelieder* were premièred. The Centre, which has most of the features of the Institute plus a shop that retails all things Schoenberg, is housed in an imposing 1917 mansion, the Palais Fanto, whose other residents include the tenor Plácido Domingo. Funded by the Austrian government, supposedly 'in eternity', it has established a strong Internet presence with an astonishingly well-organized and comprehensive Website (<http://www.Schoenberg.at>), even including its own Webradio station. The undimmed interest of scholars and researchers shows that the technical aspects of his music and the vicissitudes of his life seem fated to continue to provide topics for articles, books and learned dissertations, also 'in eternity'. It is fame of a kind.

As for his influence—one could say, if you seek Schoenberg's monument, look about you. One could, but it would be unfair. The disarray of contemporary music in the West is hardly his fault. The gap between the contemporary composer and his audience had opened long before Schoenberg was born, as far back as Beethoven's late sonatas and quartets. With Schoenberg it certainly widened, but he took care never to go beyond at least hailing distance of those willing to listen. He believed the gulf would eventually close again; for he, after all, had something to communicate from the other side. Plenty of bad twelve-note music has been written, but bad music outnumbers the good in any age. Schoenberg cannot be blamed for the mediocrity of others, or for those who use the method to disguise their poverty of invention. It is more pleasant to consider the composers who have harvested a vital beauty from it: to remember Berg's Violin Concerto and Webern's Cantatas, the sym-

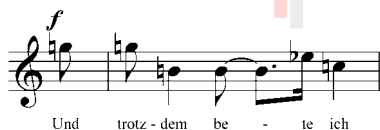
phonic achievements of Roberto Gerhard, Roger Sessions and Egon Wellesz, the expressive purity and explosive force of the works of Webern's pupil Leopold Spinner, how Gerhard wed twelve-note technique to the rhythms and colours of Spain, how Nikos Skalkottas did the same for the music of his native Greece, how Luigi Dallapiccola brought to it a specifically Italian lucidity and melodic grace. Twelve-note serialism, which in 1951 almost seemed to have died with Schoenberg, subsequently spread over the world and became a major musical force. If it appears, in the early years of the twenty-first century, to be in retreat in the face of a plethora of other musical approaches, its worth should be judged by its best results, not by the misunderstandings and barren orthodoxies that are essentially perversions of it.

For the method has grown and changed. Few composers of stature have ever used it strictly: but some have come to it only after long consideration, and employed it in whatever way came most naturally for the expressive ends they had in view. So there is really no single twelve-note method—there are as many methods 'after an idea by Arnold Schoenberg' as there are real creative personalities to apply them. We might instance the symphonies of Frankel, the operas of Henze, the concertos of Petrassi, the chamber works of Busoni's pupil Stefan Wolpe, the music of the Norwegian, Fartein Valen and the Rumanian, Roman Vlad. We might instance the most spectacular convert to serialism, shortly after Schoenberg's death—the late Stravinsky.

But the influence is wider still. There is hardly a major composer in this century whom contact with Schoenberg's work has not forced to re-examine the foundations of music. If in the event he has rejected Schoenberg's path, his own music may have gained in purpose and direction. Hindemith is one example; others are Shostakovich and Britten, who employed twelve-note melodic formations simply as one colour in their palettes. Hanns Eisler, whose enormous output of politically committed Marxist works seems utterly opposed to Schoenberg in spirit and technique, could hardly have become the composer he was had he not studied with Schoenberg and revered his mastery and perfectionism. Even the British symphonist Robert Simpson—no friend to Schoenberg's music—used to say that one of his cardinal inspirations for the treatment of tonality in symphonic form came, not from his beloved Nielsen or Bruckner, but from listening to Schoenberg's Piano Concerto.

Schoenberg is thus by now assured of his place in history. Popularity—by which one can only mean the general liking of the mass of music-lovers, for what composer save maybe Mozart or Beethoven is ‘popular’ by any universal sense?—eludes his music still. Yet it is a fact that the biggest works—the *Gurrelieder*, *Die Jakobsleiter* and *Moses und Aron*—have an immediate and dramatic impact on audiences whenever they are performed, and the other works have proved themselves on too many individual pulses for a more general acceptance to be forever withheld. In a world of fracturing values, collapsing traditions and advancing mediocracy—and with, in all probability, harder times ahead, Schoenberg’s virtues of idealism, master craftsmanship, intellectual honesty, relationship to tradition, survival (in music as in life) against extreme odds and qualified but real affirmation of human value ought to concern us more and more, and speak to us in ever clearer tones. Works like the Chamber Symphonies, the String Quartets, the String Trio, the Concertos, the Op. 35 Choruses, the Orchestral Variations, *Erwartung*, the Orchestral Pieces and *A Survivor from Warsaw* do not just deserve their place in the repertoire: they are necessary to it. Complex human nature needs complex music; and, whatever else it signifies,

Ex. 57



is certainly not the end.



Calendar

(Figures in brackets denote the age reached by the person mentioned during the year in question.)

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1874		Arnold Schoenberg born Sept. 13 at Obere Donaustrasse 5, Vienna, Second District, son of Samuel Schönberg (35), who owns a shoe shop, and Pauline (<i>née</i> Nachod) (26). At his circumcision (about Sept. 20) he is named Avraham ben Schmuël after his paternal grandfather, Abraham.	Cornelius (50) dies, Oct. 26; Holst born, Sept. 21; Ives born, Oct. 20; Franz Schmidt born, Dec. 22; Suk born, Jan. 4. Albéniz aged 14; d'Albert 10; Alkan 61; Balakirev 38; Bantock 6; Sterndale Bennett 58; Bizet 36; Boito 32; Borodin 50; Brahms 41; Bruch 36; Bruckner 50 (completes first version of Symphony No.4); Busoni 8; Chabrier 33; Charpentier 14; Chausson 17; Debussy 12; Delius 12; Dukas 9; Duparc 26; Dvořák 33; Elgar 17; Fauré 29; Franck 29; Glazunov 9; Godowsky 3; Goldmark 44; Goetz 34; Gounod 56; Granados 7; Grieg 31; Halm 5; Henselt 60; Herzogenberg 31; Humperdinck 20; d'Indy 23; Janáček 20; Koehlin 6; Lalo 51; Lekeu 4; Leoncavallo 16; Liadov 19; Liszt 63;

Year Age Life

Contemporary Musicians
and Events

- Loeffler 13; Magnard 9; Mahler 14; Mascagni 11; Massenet 32; Mussorgsky 35 (completes *Boris Godunov* and *Pictures from an Exhibition*); Nielsen 9; Novak 4; Offenbach 55; Paderewski 8; Parry 27; Pedrell 33; Pfitzner 5; Puccini 16; Raff 52; Rakhmaninov 1; Reger 1; Rimsky-Korsakov 30; Röntgen 19; Rott 16; Roussel 5; Rubinstein 44; Saint-Saëns 39; Satie 8; Schillings 6; Florent Schmitt 4; Sibelius 9; Smetana 50 (writes *Vltava*); Ethel Smyth 34; J. Strauss II 48; R. Strauss 10; Sullivan 32; Tchaikovsky 34; Vaughan Williams 2; Verdi 61 (completes *Requiem*); Wagner 61; Wolf 14; Zemlinsky 2.
- 1875 1 Sterndale Bennett (59) dies, Feb. 1; Bizet (37) dies, June 3 (*Carmen* completed); Carillo born, Jan. 28; Coleridge-Taylor born, Aug. 15; Glière born, Jan. 11; Ravel born, March 7; Tovey born, July 17. Goldmark (45) completes *Die Königin von Saba*; Tchaikovsky (35), Piano Concerto No. 1. Birth of C. G. Jung, July 26.
- 1876 2 The family moves to Theresiengasse 5. Birth of sister Ottilie (1876–1954), June 9.
- 1877 3 Havergal Brian born, Jan. 29; Falla born, Nov. 23; Goetz (36) dies, Dec. 3; Ruggles born, March 11; Wolf-Ferrari born, Jan. 12. First perfs. of Tchaikovsky, *Swan Lake*; Wagner, complete *Ring* cycle, Bayreuth, Aug. 13–17; Brahms, Symphony No. 1, Nov. 6.
- Dohnányi born, July 27; First perf. of Brahms, Symphony No. 2, Dec. 30; Saint-Saëns, *Samson et Dalila*.

Year Age Life			Contemporary Musicians and Events
1878	4		Rutland Boughton born, Jan. 23; Holbrooke born, July 6; Schreker born, March 23. Rott (20) completes Symphony in E; Tchaikovsky (38), Symphony No. 4.
1879	5		Frank Bridge born, Feb. 26; Ireland born, Aug. 13; Respighi born, July 9; Alma Schindler (later Mahler) born, Aug. 31; Cyril Scott born, Sept. 27. First perf. of Brahms, Violin Concerto, Jan. 1. Franck (57) completes Piano Quintet; Tchaikovsky (39) <i>Eugene Onegin</i> . Birth of Einstein, March 14.
1880	6	The family moves to Taborstrasse 48, where Arnold goes to primary school in Klein Pfarrgasse.	Bloch born, July 24; Foulds born, Dec. 2; Medtner born, Dec. 24; Offenbach (61) dies, Oct. 5; F. G. Scott born, Jan. 25. Mahler (20) writes <i>Das klagende Lied</i> .
1881	7	Dec. 8, destruction of the Ringtheater by fire. Arnold's uncle Heinrich Nachod (34) and his wife are among the dead. Their daughters Mela (3) and Olga (1) are adopted by the Schönbergs and come to live with the family.	Bartók born, March 25; Enescu born, Aug. 19; Miaskovsky born, April 20; Mussorgsky (42) dies, March 28; Roslavets born, Jan. 4. First perf. of Brahms, Piano Concerto No. 2, Nov. 9.
1882	8	Birth of brother Heinrich (1882–1941), April 29. Begins learning the violin.	Grainger born, July 8; Kodály born, Dec. 16; Malipiero born, March 18; Raff (60) dies, June 24; Schnabel born, April 17; Stravinsky born, June 17; Szymanowski born, Oct. 6; First perf. of Wagner, <i>Parsifal</i> , July 25. Hugo Riemann (33) publishes his <i>Musiklexicon</i> .
1883	9	First attempts at composition.	Bax born, Nov. 8; Casella born, July 25; Hauer born, March 19; Klenau born, Feb. 11; Varèse born, Dec. 22; Wagner (69) dies, Feb. 13; Webern born, Dec. 3. Death of Karl Marx, March 14.

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1884	10		Van Dieren born, Dec. 27; Griffes born, Sept. 17; Rott (26) dies, June 25; Smetana (60) dies, May 12. First perf. of Bruckner, Symphony No. 7, Dec. 30. Bruckner (60) <i>Te Deum</i> ; Mahler (24), <i>Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen</i> .
1885	11	Goes to Realschule (the K.K. Staatsoberrealschule zu Wien, Second District). Meets Oskar Adler (10), who teaches him music theory and becomes a partner in chamber music. During the next few years Arnold teaches himself the cello and composes marches, polkas, <i>Ländler</i> , and so forth in the popular style of the day.	Berg born, Feb. 7; Butterworth born, July 12; Reigiger born, April 29; Wellesz born, Oct. 21. First perf. of Brahms, Symphony No. 4, Oct. 25. Dvořák (44), writes Symphony No. 7; Liszt (73), <i>Bagatelle without Tonality</i> .
1886	12	Samuel Schönberg (47) acquires a commission and collection agency.	Liszt (74) dies, July 31; Ponchielli (51) dies, Jan. 17; Schoeck born, Sept. 1. Fauré (41) composes <i>Requiem</i> .
1887	13		Atterberg born, Dec. 12; Borodin (53) dies, Feb. 28; Tiessen born, April 10; Toch born, Dec. 7; Fartein Valen born, Aug. 25; Villa-Lobos born, Feb. 8. Bruckner (63) completes Symphony No. 8; Goldmark (47) <i>Rustic Wedding</i> Symphony. First perfs. of Brahms, Double Concerto, Oct. 18; Verdi, <i>Otello</i> , Feb. 5.
1888	14	Death of grandmother Teresia (81) in Pressburg.	Alkan (74) dies, March 20; Max Butting born, Oct. 6; Vermeulen born, Feb. 8. Franck (66) writes Symphony in D minor; Satie (22), <i>Gymnopédies</i> . Wilhelm II becomes German Emperor.
1889	15	Influenza epidemic in Vienna. Arnold ill from it. Samuel Schönberg dies of it on Dec. 31, at the age of 51.	Henselt (75) dies, Oct. 10; First perfs. of Strauss, <i>Don Juan</i> , Nov. 11; Mahler, Symphony No. 1, Nov. 20. Parry (42) composes Symphonies Nos. 3 (<i>English</i>) and 4. Birth of Hitler, April 20.

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1890	16	In love with his cousin Malvina Goldschmeid (14).	Franck (67) dies, Nov. 8; Freitas Branco born, Oct. 12; Ibert born, Aug. 15; Frank Martin born, Sept. 15; Martinů born, Dec. 8; Nyström born, Oct. 13. Strauss (26) composes <i>Tod und Verklärung</i> ; Wolf (30), <i>Spanisches Liederbuch</i> .
1891	17	Leaves school on Jan. 22 without taking the final examinations. Goes to work for Werner & Co., a private bank in the Wipplingerstrasse. Composes a <i>Lied ohne Worte</i> in Malvina's honour.	Bliss born, Aug. 2; Marek born, 16 September; Prokofiev born, April 13. Brahms (58) composes Clarinet Quintet; Wolf (31) <i>Italienisches Liederbuch</i> .
1892	18	Friendship with David Josef Bach (18), who shares his interests in literature, music and philosophy.	Honegger born, March 10; Howells born, Oct. 17; Kilpinen born, Feb. 4; Lalo (60) dies, April 22; Milhaud born, Sept. 4; Rosenberg born, June 6; Sorabji born Aug. 14. Sibelius (27) writes <i>En Saga</i> (orig. version). First perf. of Bruckner, Symphony No. 8, Dec. 18. Maeterlinck (30) writes <i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i> , Albert Guiraud writes <i>Pierrot Lunaire</i> .
1893	19	Composes many songs.	Gounod (75) dies, Oct. 18; Hábá born, June 21; Aare Merikanto born June 29; Tchaikovsky (53) dies, Nov. 6. First perfs. of Verdi, <i>Falstaff</i> , Feb. 9; Tchaikovsky, <i>Pathétique</i> Symphony, Oct. 28. Brahms (60) completes the <i>Klavierstücke</i> , Opp. 116–19; Dvořák (52) Symphony No. 9 <i>From the New World</i> .
1894	20	Composes Three Piano Pieces and (perhaps) a String Quartet in C major. Receives encouragement from Josef Labor (52).	Chabrier (53) dies, Sept. 13; Dessau born, Dec. 19; Grosz (Wilhelm) born, Aug. 11; Heseltine born, Oct. 30; Lekeu (23) dies, Jan. 21; Moeran born, Dec. 31; Pijper born, Sept. 8; Piston born Jan. 20; Rubinstein (64) dies, Nov. 20; Schulhoff born, June 8.

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
			Debussy (32) composes <i>Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune</i> . First perf. of Strauss, <i>Guntram</i> , May 10.
1895	21	Plays cello in the amateur orchestra Polyhymnia, conducted by Alexander von Zemlinsky (23), who becomes a close friend. Polyhymnia awards Schoenberg a composition prize for the song <i>Schilffied</i> . Loses his job with Werner & Co.; from now on devotes himself exclusively to music. Starts conducting workers' choral societies.	Castelnuovo-Tedesco born, April 3; Hindemith born, Nov. 16; Orff born, July 10; Dvořák (54) writes Cello Concerto. First perf. of Mahler, Symphony No. 2, Dec. 13.
1896	22	Serenade in D (unfinished). Becomes choirmaster (until 1898) of the Mödlinger Arbeitergesangverein and of metalworkers' choirs in Stockerau and Meidling.	Bruckner (72) dies, Oct. 11 (Symphony No. 9 unfinished); Gerhard born, Sept. 25; Sessions born, Dec. 28; Vogel born, Feb. 29. Mahler (36) completes Symphony No. 3; Strauss (32) <i>Also Sprach Zarathustra</i> . First perf. of Puccini, <i>La Bohème</i> , Feb. 1. Richard Dehmelt (33) writes <i>Weib und Welt</i> .
1897	23	Supports himself by orchestrations and piano-vocal arrangements of other composers' works. Composes String Quartet in D major (performed with success at end of year) and Dehmelt songs.	Ben-Haim born, July 5; Brahms (63) dies, April 3; Cowell born, March 11; Korngold born, May 29; Saeverud born, April 17.
1898	24	Converts from Judaism to Protestantism (baptised on March 25). Sketches a symphonic poem <i>Frühlings Tod</i> .	Eisler born, July 6; Gershwin born, Sept. 25; Hanneenheim born, 15 May; Roy Harris born, Feb. 12; Ullmann born Jan. 1; Rankl born, Oct. 1. Strauss (34) composes <i>Ein Heldenleben</i> ; first perf. of <i>Don Quixote</i> , March 8.
1899	25	Relationship with Zemlinsky's sister Mathilde (22). Summer, composes sextet <i>Verklärte Nacht</i> . Conducts a male chorus in Heiligenstadt.	Baines born, March 26; Chausson (44) dies, June 10; Chavéz born, June 13; Poulenc born, Jan. 7; Revueltas born, Dec. 31; Johann Strauss II (73) dies, June 3. First perf. of Elgar, <i>Enigma Variations</i> ,

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1900	26	Composes the bulk of the <i>Gurrelieder</i> . Songs Opp. 1 and 2 premiered. Apart from choral conducting he earns his living scoring operettas. Meets Alma-Maria Schindler (20), soon to be Mahler's wife.	June 19. Debussy (37) completes his <i>Trois Nocturnes</i> . Karl Kraus begins publication of <i>Die Fackel</i> . Antheil born, July 9; Alan Bush born, Dec. 22; Copland born, Nov. 14; Herzogenberg (57) dies, Oct. 9; Krenek born, Aug. 23; Sullivan (58) dies, Nov. 22; Weill born, March 2. First perfs. of Puccini, <i>Tosca</i> , Jan. 14; Charpentier, <i>Louise</i> , Feb. 2; Faure, <i>Prométhée</i> , Aug. 26; Elgar, <i>The Dream of Gerontius</i> , Oct. 3; Zemlinsky, <i>Es war Einmal</i> . Freud publishes <i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i> . Strindberg (51) writes <i>The Dance of Death</i> .
1901	27	Completes the draft of the <i>Gurrelieder</i> , and begins scoring it. Composes cabaret songs and meets Ernst von Wolzogen, who invites him to Berlin as music director of the <i>Überbrettl</i> cabaret. Marries Mathilde von Zemlinsky (24): civil ceremony in Pressburg (Oct. 7), followed by Protestant wedding in Vienna (Oct. 18). They move to Berlin in Dec.	Ruth Crawford born, July 3; Finzi born, July 14; Rheinberger (62) dies, Nov. 25; Rubbra born, May 23; Verdi (87) dies, Jan. 27. First perf. of Mahler's Symphony No. 4, Nov. 25. Strindberg (52) writes <i>To Damascus</i> .
1902	28	Daughter Gertrud (1902–47) born, Jan. 8. <i>Verklärte Nacht</i> receives a stormy first performance (Vienna, March 18). Meets Richard Strauss (38) in April. Leaves the <i>Überbrettl</i> in July. Abandons work on the <i>Gurrelieder</i> , but continues scoring operettas. Strauss helps him financially and with copying work, and suggests composing an opera on Maeterlinck's <i>Pelleas</i> ; Schoenberg begins a symphonic poem instead (started July 4).	Durufié born, Jan. 11; Walton born, March 29; Wolpe born, Aug. 25. First perfs. of Debussy, <i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i> , April 30; Sibelius, Symphony No. 2, March 8; Grainger (20) completes <i>Hill-Song No. 1</i> ; Mahler (42) Symphony No. 5.

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1903	29	<p>Completes <i>Pelleas und Melisande</i>, Feb. 28; he shows it to Busoni (37), who conducts his orchestration of Schenker's <i>Syrische Tänze</i> in Berlin (Nov.). Finds his first publisher, Dreililien Verlag of Berlin. Strauss secures him the Liszt Stipendium for a second year. Returns to Vienna in July and rents an apartment in the Leichtensteinstrasse. Arranging work for Universal Edition. Meets Mahler (43) for the first time. Teaches harmony and counterpoint at the Music Course in Dr Eugenie Schwarzwald's school; pupils include Egon Wellesz (18) and Heinrich Jalowetz (21).</p>	<p>Berkeley born. May 12; Blacher born, Jan. 3; Goldschmidt born, Jan. 18; Khachaturian born, June 6; Wagner-Régeny born, Aug. 28; Wolf (42) dies, Feb. 22. D'Albert (39) completes <i>Tiefeland</i>; Zemlinsky (31) <i>Die Seejungfrau</i>. First perf. of Bruckner, Symphony No. 9, Feb. 11.</p>
1904	30	<p>With Zemlinsky (32) founds 'Society of Creative Musicians'; Mahler (44) is Honorary President. Spends summer at Brühlerstrasse 104, Mödling, in a house belonging to David Bach's parents. Composes <i>Six Orchestral Songs</i>, Op. 8 (Mar.–Nov.) and begins the String Quartet Op. 7. In financial difficulties, begins teaching composition privately. Anton Webern (21) becomes a pupil in the autumn, soon followed by Alban Berg (19) and Erwin Stein (18). Friendship with the architect Adolf Loos (34), who surreptitiously helps finance several Schoenberg performances over the next few years.</p>	<p>Dallapiccola born, Feb. 3; Dvořák (63) dies, May 1; Petrassi born, July 16; Skalkottas born, March 8. First perfs. of Janáček, <i>Jenůfa</i>, Jan. 21; Puccini, <i>Madama Butterfly</i>, Feb. 17; Delius, <i>Appalachia</i>, Oct. 1; Busoni, Piano Concerto, Nov. 10. Ives (30) completes Symphony No. 3; Mahler (44) Symphony No. 6.</p>
1905	31	<p>Joint premiere of Schoenberg's <i>Pelleas und Melisande</i> and Zemlinsky's <i>Die Seejungfrau</i>, conducted by the composers,</p>	<p>Blitzstein born, March 2; Hartmann born, Aug. 2; Jolivet born, Aug. 8; Lambert born, Aug. 23; Rawsthorne born.</p>

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		Vienna, Jan. 26. Completes String Quartet No. 1 on Sept. 26 at Traunstein near Gmunden. Also finishes the <i>Eight Songs</i> , Op. 6 (Oct.).	May 2; Scelsi born, Jan. 8; Seiber born. May 4; Tippett born, Jan. 2; Zillig born, May 1. First perfs. of Debussy, <i>La Mer</i> , Oct. 15; Strauss, <i>Salome</i> , Dec. 9. Mahler (45) completes Symphony No. 7. Einstein formulates Special Theory of Relativity.
1906	32	Completes the First Chamber Symphony, Op.9 at Rottach, Tegernsee, July 25. Begins work on the Second (Aug. 1)—destined to stay unfinished for over thirty years. Son Georg (1906–74) born, Sept. 22.	Frankel born, Jan. 31; Lutyens born, July 9; Shostakovich born, Sept. 25; Spinner born, April 26. Elgar (49) completes <i>The Kingdom</i> ; Ives (42) <i>The Unanswered Question</i> ; Mahler (46) Symphony No. 8.
1907	33	The First String Quartet and Chamber Symphony are premiered in Vienna, Feb. 5 and 8 respectively. The Rosé Quartet repeat the former in Dresden in June. <i>Two Ballads</i> , Op. 12 composed (March–April); <i>Friede auf Erden</i> completed March 9 and String Quartet No.2 begun the same day. Becoming active as a painter, takes lessons from Richard Gerstl (24) who becomes a close friend of the family; Gerstl and Mathilde (30) have an affair. Mahler (47) leaves Vienna, Dec. 9.	Badings born, Jan. 17; Fortner born, Oct. 12; Grieg (64) dies, Sept. 4. First perf. of Sibelius, Symphony No.3, Sept. 25.
1908	34	Summer: Gerstl holidays with the Schoenbergs at Traunsee. He elopes with Mathilde. Schoenberg completes String Quartet No. 2 (dedicated 'to my wife'), works on Chamber Symphony No. 2, begins <i>Das buch der hängenden Gärten</i> and makes first sketch for <i>Die glückliche Hand</i> . Webern (25) eventually persuades	Elliott Carter born, Dec. 11; Kabeláč born, Aug. 1; Messiaen born, Dec. 10; Rimsky-Korsakov (64) dies, June 21. First perfs. of Elgar, Symphony No. 1, Dec. 3; Scriabin, <i>Poem of Ecstasy</i> , Dec. 10. Mahler (48) composes <i>Das Lied von der Erde</i> ; Schreker (30) <i>Der Geburtstag der Infantin</i> (premiered at Klimt's Vienna <i>Kunstschau</i>); Webern <i>Passacaglia</i> , Op.1.

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		Mathilde to return to Schoenberg. Gerstl commits suicide, Nov. 4. On Dec. 21 the Rosé Quartet, with Marie Gutheil Schoder, give the first performance of String Quartet No. 2, amid scenes of uproar and abuse.	
1909	35	In a great creative upsurge, Schoenberg completes <i>Das Buch der hängenden Gärten</i> on Feb. 28; composes the <i>Three Piano Pieces</i> , Op. 11 (in Feb. and Aug.), <i>Five Pieces for Orchestra</i> , Op. 16 (May–Aug.) and the monodrama <i>Erwartung</i> , Op. 17 (Aug. 27–Oct. 4). Sends the first two of the Op. 11 Pieces to Busoni (43), who makes a ‘concert interpretation’ of the second. First published articles. Expressionist ‘credo’ in letter to Busoni (Aug.). Offers the Op. 16 Pieces to Richard Strauss, who turns them down. Contract with Universal Edition, who will remain his principal publisher for many years. Josef Polnauer (21) becomes a pupil.	Albéniz (48) dies, May 18; Holmboe born, Dec. 20. First perfs. of Strauss, <i>Elektra</i> , Jan. 25; Delius, <i>A Mass of Life</i> (complete), June 10; Rachmaninov, Piano Concerto No. 3, Nov. 28; Webern (26) writes 5 <i>Pieces for String Quartet</i> , Op. 5. First Futurist Manifesto.
1910	36	Opp. 11 and 15 premiered in Vienna, Jan. 14. Writes <i>Three Little Pieces</i> for chamber orchestra, Feb. 8. Becomes an outside lecturer at the Imperial Academy from June 28—his application supported by Mahler (50), Löwe (45), Weingartner (47), and Goldmark (80). In grave financial straits, is forced to borrow from Mahler (Aug.). Works on <i>Harmonielehre</i> and begins <i>Die glückliche Hand</i> , Sept. 9; highly successful second performance of <i>Pelleas</i> in Berlin,	Balakirev (73) dies, May 29; Barber born, March 9; William Schuman born, Aug. 4; Tal born, Sept. 18. Busoni (44) composes the <i>Fantasia Contrappuntistica</i> (first version); Debussy (48), <i>Préludes</i> Book 1; Grainger (28) <i>Mock Morris</i> . Mahler (50) completes Symphony No. 9 and begins No. 10; Novák (40), <i>The Storm</i> ; Roslavets (29) <i>In the Hours of the New Moon</i> ; Scriabin (38), <i>Prometheus</i> ; Stravinsky (28), <i>The Firebird</i> (first perf. June 25);

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		<p>under Oskar Fried, Oct. 8. Holds his first exhibition of paintings this month (Vienna, Galerie Heller). Paintings of this year include 'Christ', 'Red Gaze' and 'Gustav Mahler: Vision'.</p>	<p>Vaughan Williams (36), <i>Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis</i> (first perf. Sept. 6); Webern (27), <i>Six Pieces for Orchestra</i>, Op. 6; Zemlinsky (38), <i>Kleider machen Leute</i> (first perf. Oct. 2).</p>
1911	37	<p>Composes the <i>Six Little Piano Pieces</i>, Op. 19 (Feb.–June) and completes the first edition of <i>Harmonielehre</i> in July. First contact with Kandinsky (45). After Mahler's death and dispute with neighbour, is forced to leave Vienna; the family spends much of Sept. near Munich in very straitened circumstances. Meets Otto Klemperer (26). Reaches Berlin at end of the month and lectures at the Stern Conservatoire. <i>Gurrelieder</i> finally completed (Nov. 8) and <i>Herzgewächse</i> composed. Paintings of this year include 'Self-portrait from behind'; this, and two 'Visions', are featured in the first 'Blaue Reiter' Exhibition in Munich (opened Dec. 18).</p>	<p>Hovhaness born, March 8; Mahler (50) dies, May 29; Allan Pettersson born. First perfs. of Strauss, <i>Der Rosenkavalier</i>, Jan. 16; Sibelius, Symphony No. 4, April 3; Elgar, Symphony No. 2, May 24; Stravinsky, <i>Petrushka</i>, June 13; Mahler, <i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>, Nov. 20. Bartók (30) composes <i>Bluebeard's Castle</i>, Ives (37) <i>Robert Browning Overture</i>. Thomas Mann (36) writes <i>Death in Venice</i>.</p>
1912	38	<p>Chamber concert of his works in Berlin, Feb. 4. Conducts <i>Pelleas</i> in Prague, Feb. 29; on Mar. 25 gives lecture there in memory of Mahler. Teaches composition in Berlin, pupils including Edward Clarke (24) and Eduard Steuermann (20). Four paintings shown in the Blaue Reiter collective exhibition (Berlin, March–May) and <i>Herzgewächse</i> and an essay are published in the <i>Blaue Reiter Almanac</i>. Composes <i>Pierrot Lunaire</i> (also March–May) to a commission from Albertine Zehme; premieres it in Berlin,</p>	<p>Cage born, Sept. 15; Markevitch born, 27 July; Massenet (70) dies, Aug. 13; Nancarrow born, Oct. 27. First perfs. of Busoni, <i>Die Brautwahl</i>, April 13; Schreker, <i>Die ferne Klang</i>, Aug. 18; Strauss, <i>Ariadne auf Naxos</i> (first version), Oct. 25. Debussy (50) composes <i>Jeux</i> and <i>Khamma</i>; Ives (48) <i>Three Places in New England</i>; Parry (64), Symphony No. 5 and <i>Nativity Ode</i>; Reger (39) <i>Ein romantische Suite</i>; Suk (38), <i>Zrání</i>.</p>

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		<p>Oct. 16, and tours the work through Germany and Austria, sharing conducting with Hermann Scherchen (21). The <i>Five Orchestral Pieces</i> are premiered in London by Henry Wood (43), Sept. 3. Conducts <i>Pelleas</i> in Amsterdam (Nov. 30) and St Petersburg (Dec. 21). Begins sketching a very large-scale symphony.</p>	
1913	39	<p>Premiere of the <i>Gurrelieder</i> (Feb. 23, Vienna under Franz Schreker) is an overwhelming success, but a concert of music by Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Mahler, and Zemlinsky (Vienna, March 31) provokes riots. He is awarded the first Mahler Stipend. Composes 'Seraphita', first of the Op. 22 <i>Orchestral Songs</i> (finished Oct. 6) and completes <i>Die glückliche Hand</i> on Nov. 20.</p>	<p>Britten born, Nov. 22; Lutoslawski born, Jan. 25. First perfs. of Fauré, <i>Pénélope</i>, March 4; Schreker, <i>Das Spielwerk und die Prinzessin</i>, March 15; Stravinsky, <i>The Rite of Spring</i>, May 20; Elgar, <i>Falstaff</i>, Oct. 1. Ives (49) completes <i>The Fourth of July</i>; Magnard (48) Symphony No. 4; Marek (22) <i>Triptychon</i>; Scriabin (41), Piano Sonatas 8–10; Webern (30) <i>Five Pieces for Orchestra</i>, Op. 10.</p>
1914	40	<p>In Jan., conducts <i>Gurrelieder</i> in Leipzig and the <i>Five Orchestral Pieces</i> in London. Still sketching symphony, notes down twelve-note theme on May 27. Summer in Upper Bavaria, near Kandinsky (48). Composes 'Alle, welche dich suchen' (Nov.–Dec.).</p>	<p>Liadov (59) dies, Aug. 28; Magnard (49) dies, Sept. 3; Panufnik born, Sept. 24. First perf. of Boughton, <i>The Immortal Hour</i>. Ives (40) completes <i>Three Places in New England</i>, Roslavets (33), <i>Three Compositions</i> for piano; Schillings (46), <i>Mona Lisa</i>; Vaughan Williams (42), <i>A London Symphony</i> (first perf. March 27). First World War begins July 28.</p>
1915	41	<p>Completes 'Mach mich zum Wächter' on Jan. 1 and the poem 'Totentanz der Prinzipien' on Jan. 15. Begins the text of <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i>. Conducts Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Vienna (April). Moves back to that city in the summer, living (from Sept.) at Gloriettegasse 43,</p>	<p>Goldmark (84) dies, Jan. 2; Kaprálová born, Jan. 24; Scriabin (43) dies, April 27; Searle born, Aug 26. Debussy (53) writes <i>En Blanc et Noir</i>, <i>Études</i>, and two sonatas; Ives (41) completes the <i>Concord Sonata</i> and <i>Tone-Roads</i> No. 3; Schreker (37) <i>Die Gezeichneten</i>; Strauss (51),</p>

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		Thirteenth District. Called up for the Austrian Army in Dec.	<i>Ein Alpensinfonie</i> . First use of poison gas in war, at Ypres, April. Einstein formulates General Theory of Relativity.
1916	42	In camp, composes <i>Die eiserne Brigade</i> . Composes 'Vorgefühl', last of the Op. 22 Songs, in July. Suffers from asthma attacks, but is not discharged from the army till Oct. 20. Resumes work on <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> and (for the last time for twenty years) works at Chamber Symphony No.2.	Babbitt born, May 10; Butterworth (31) dies, Aug. 5; Dutilleux born, Jan. 22; Ginastera born, April 11; Granados (48) drowns March 24; Reger (42) dies, May 11; Schiske born, Feb. 12. First perf. of Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, Feb. 1; d'Albert, <i>Die toten Augen</i> , March 5. Ives (42) completes Symphony No. 4. Battle of the Somme, June.
1917	43	Completes text of <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> on May 26 and begins composing the music (stemming from the unfinished symphony). Egon Schiele (27) paints his portrait. Erwin Ratz (29) becomes a composition pupil. Also from now until the mid-1920s working on a number of theoretical textbooks which are never finished. Called up again on Sept. 19, irreparably interrupting work on <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> . Discharged on Dec. 7 as physically unfit.	First perfs. of Busoni, <i>Arlecchino</i> , May 11; Debussy, Violin Sonata, May 5; Pfitzner, <i>Palestrina</i> , June 12; Satie, <i>Parade</i> , May 18; Schreker, Chamber Symphony, March 12; Zemlinsky, <i>Eine florentinische Tragödie</i> , Jan. 30; Baines (18) composes Symphony in C minor, Holst (43) <i>The Hymn of Jesus</i> . The Bolsheviks seize power in Russia.
1918	44	Begins new composition class in Dr Schwarzwald's School (Jan.–April); Josef Rufer (25) and Karl Rankl (20) become pupils. Moves to Bernhardgasse 6, Mödling in April. Conducts 10 public rehearsals of Chamber Symphony No. 1 in Vienna (June). On 23 Nov. founds Society for Private Musical Performances, with Webern (35), Berg (33) and Steuermann (26) as his chief assistants. First concert, Dec. 29, features Debussy, Mahler and Scriabin.	Debussy (55) dies, March 26; von Einem born, Jan.24; Gideon Klein born, Dec. 6; Parry (70) dies, Oct. 7; Rochberg born, July 5; Zimmermann born, March 18. First perf. of Stravinsky, <i>The Soldier's Tale</i> , Sept. 28. Brian (42) completes <i>The Tigers</i> . Armistice Nov. 11; fall of the Habsburg Empire; Austria declared a republic.

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1919	45	Hanns Eisler (21), Rudolf Kolisch (23) and Viktor Ullmann (21) become pupils. Contributes the article on Music to Adolf Loos's symposium <i>Guidelines for a Ministry of the Arts</i> . Paints 'The Victor' and 'the Vanquished' in April.	Leon Kirchner born, Jan. 24; Leoncavallo (61) dies, Aug. 9; Vlad born, Dec. 29. First perf. of Elgar, Cello Concerto, Oct. 27; Bartok (38) composes <i>The Miraculous Mandarin</i> , Satie (53), <i>Socrate</i> . Treaty of Versailles; League of Nations created.
1920	46	Felix Greissle (26) becomes a pupil. Conducts in Amsterdam in March. Returns there in May with his family, Webern (37) and Wellesz (35) to attend the first Mahler Festival; elected President of the International Mahler League. Conducts <i>Gurrelieder</i> in Vienna, June 13. First sketches of <i>Serenade</i> , Aug. In Oct., returns to Holland to conduct and lecture until the following spring.	Bruch (82) dies, Oct. 2; Fricker born, Sept. 5; Griffes (36) dies, April 8; Maderna born, April 21. First perf. of Korngold, <i>Die Tote Stadt</i> , Dec. 4; Stravinsky, <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> , June 10; Vermeulen (32) completes Symphony No. 2, <i>Prelude à la nouvelle journée</i> .
1921	47	Conducts <i>Gurrelieder</i> in Amsterdam, March 19, before he returns to Vienna. In June, goes to Mattsee for a holiday but is forced to leave because of local antisemitic discrimination. Spends the summer in Traunkirchen, working on <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> and on Opp. 23–5; he 'discovers' the twelve-note method probably at the end of July. Mother Pauline (73) dies in Berlin, Oct. 12. Felix Greissle (27) marries daughter Gertrud (19). Publication of Schoenberg biography by Egon Wellesz (36). Conducts <i>Pierrot Lunaire</i> at the 154th and last concert of the Vienna Society for Private Musical Performances, Dec. 5.	Humperdinck (67) dies, Sept. 27; Andrew Imbrie born, April 6; Saint-Saens (86) dies, Dec. 16; Robert Simpson born, March 2. First perfs. of Hindemith, <i>Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen</i> and <i>Das Nusch-Nuschi</i> . Berg (36) completes <i>Wozzeck</i> ; Fauré (76), Piano Quintet No. 2; Weill (21), Symphony No. 1; Zemlinsky (49), <i>Der Zwerg</i> .

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1922	48	Conducts <i>Pierrot</i> in Prague, May 25, for the first concert of the Prague Society for Private Musical Performances, successor to the Vienna society. Writes expanded version of <i>Harmonielehre</i> . Arranges two Bach chorale-preludes for orchestra (April–June). Breaks off work on <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> in July. Arranges the <i>Lied der Waldbaube</i> in Dec.	Baines (23) dies, Nov. 6; Pedrell (81) dies, Aug. 19; Xenakis born. May 29. First perfs. of Nielsen, Symphony No. 5, Jan. 24; Vaughan Williams, <i>A Pastoral Symphony</i> , Jan. 26. Ives (48) publishes <i>114 Songs</i> . Mussolini seizes power in Italy. Wittgenstein publishes <i>Tractatus logico-philosophicus</i> .
1923	49	Raging inflation in Austria. Does his best to aid other musicians, notably Berg (38), Eisler (25), and Hauer (40), whom he meets in Dec. after correspondence on twelve-note composition. Completes <i>Five Piano Pieces</i> Op. 23 and <i>Serenade</i> Op. 24 in April. Break with Kandinsky (57) over alleged anti-Semitic tendencies at the Bauhaus; Schoenberg warns him against Hitler in a letter of May 4. Suite for piano Op. 25 completed in July. At some point this year he expounds the twelve-note method for the first time to a gathering of his pupils. Mathilde falls ill in Sept. and dies of a malignant tumour on Oct. 18. Writes the poem 'Requiem' in her memory, Nov. 15. Roberto Gerhard (27) becomes a pupil at the end of the year.	Ligeti born, May 28. First perfs. of Sibelius, Symphony No., 6, Feb. 19; Stravinsky, <i>Les Noces</i> , June 13 and Octet, Oct. 18; Foulds, <i>A World Requiem</i> , Nov. 11. F.G. Scott (43) composes <i>Country Life</i> ; Zemlinsky (51), the <i>Lytic Symphony</i> . First rally of the Nazi party, Jan.
1924	50	Jan.: at the request of the Mödling municipal authorities, conducts a benefit concert for 'Germans in distress'— <i>Verklärte Nacht</i> , <i>Gurrelieder</i> extracts, Beethoven Violin Concerto with Kolisch (28) as soloist. Concert tour of Italy, conducting <i>Pierrot</i> , March–	Braga Santos born, My 14; Busoni (58) dies, July 27 (leaving <i>Doktor Faust</i> unfinished); Fauré (79) dies, Nov. 4; Nono born, Jan. 29; Puccini (65) dies, Nov. 29; Scharwenka (74) dies, Dec. 8; Christopher Shaw born, July 30. Holst (50) completes <i>First Choral</i>

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		<p>April. Meets Puccini (56). Conducts premiere of <i>Serenade</i>, Donaueschingen, May 2; premieres of <i>Erwartung</i> (under Zemlinsky, Prague, June 6) and <i>Die glückliche Hand</i> (Vienna, under Fritz Stiedry, Oct. 14). Several other concerts given to mark his fiftieth birthday. Completes the Wind Quintet in Aug. Marries Gertrud (26), sister of pupil Rudolf Kolisch, on Aug. 28. Portrait painted by Oskar Kokoschka (38).</p>	<p><i>Symphony</i>. First perf. of Strauss, <i>Intermezzo</i>, Nov. 4. Thomas Mann (49) publishes <i>The Magic Mountain</i>.</p>
1925	51	<p>Holiday in Italy, Jan.–Feb.; conducts <i>Pierrot</i> in Barcelona in April. Attends ISCM Festival in Venice, Aug.–Sept. and conducts <i>Serenade</i>. On Aug. 28, appointed director of the Composition Masterclass at the Berlin Academy of Arts, in succession to Busoni. Working on projected textbook about the musical idea and its representation, which remains unfinished. Operation for appendicitis in Nov. Writes the choruses Opp. 27–8 (Sept.–Dec.). Winfried Zillig (20) becomes a private pupil.</p>	<p>Berio born, Oct. 10; Boulez born, March 25; Klebe born, June 28; Satie (59) dies, July 1. First perf. of Varèse, <i>Intégrales</i>, March 1. Berg (40) composes the Chamber Concerto; Max Butting (37), <i>Symphony No. 3</i>.</p>
1926	52	<p>Arrives in Berlin, followed by pupils Gerhard (30), Zillig (21) and Rufer (33), whom he makes his assistant. New pupils include Walter Goehr (23) and the American Adolf Weiss (35). Completes the <i>Suite</i> (Septet) Op. 29 on May 1; begins <i>Variations for Orchestra</i> on May 2, and works on the Zionist play <i>Der biblische Weg</i>. Visits Vienna in autumn.</p>	<p>Cerha born, Feb. 17; Feldman born, Jan. 12; Henze born, July 1. First perfs. of Hindemith, <i>Cardillac</i>, Nov. 9, Janáček, <i>Sinfonietta</i>, June 26; Sibelius, <i>Tapiola</i>, Dec. 26; Vaughan Williams, <i>Sancta Civitas</i>, May 7. First sound films. Baird invents television.</p>

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1927	53	Composes String Quartet No. 3 (Jan.–March; first perf. in Vienna, Sept. 19 by the Kolisch Quartet) and completes <i>Der Biblische Weg</i> on July 12. Marc Blitzstein (22) becomes a pupil in Jan., Nikos Skalkottas (23) in Oct. Reconciled with Kandinsky (61). Conducts in Berlin, Spain, and Paris, and lectures at the Sorbonne in Dec.	First perfs. of Berg, <i>Lyric Suite</i> , Jan. 8; Janáček, <i>Glagolitic Mass</i> , Dec. 5; Korngold, <i>Das Wunder der Heliane</i> , Oct. 7; Křenek, <i>Johnny Spielt Auf</i> , Feb. 10; Stravinsky, <i>Oedipus Rex</i> , May 30. Brian (51) completes the <i>Gothic</i> Symphony; Bridge (48), <i>Enter Spring</i> ; Holst (53) <i>Egdon Heath</i> ; Varèse (44), <i>Arcana</i> ; Webern (44), String Trio. Columbia Graphophone International competition for a completion of Schubert's <i>Unfinished</i> Symphony or a modern work 'in the spirit of Schubert'. Lindbergh flies the Atlantic.
1928	54	Conducts British premiere of <i>Gurrelieder</i> in London, Jan. 27; also conducts in Basle and Berne. German premiere of <i>Die glückliche Hand</i> in Breslau, March 24. Spends the summer in Roquebrune on the French Riviera, and takes a six-month leave of absence from Berlin because of poor health. Completes <i>Variations for Orchestra</i> , Op. 31 (Sept. 20)—first perf. in Berlin, Dec 2, under Furtwängler (42). Orchestrates Bach's Prelude & Fugue in E flat, May–Oct.; writes the libretto of <i>Moses und Aron</i> (Oct.); composes <i>Von heute auf Morgen</i> (Oct.–Jan.1, 1929).	Barraqué born, Jan. 17; Janáček (74) dies, Aug. 12; Ronald Stevenson born, March 6; Stockhausen born, Aug. 22. Atterberg (40) completes Symphony No. 6 (winner of Columbia Graphophone Competition); Bartók (47) String Quartet No. 4; Goldschmidt (25) <i>Partita</i> ; Marek (37) <i>Sinfonia</i> ; Schreker (50) completes <i>Christophorus</i> ; Webern (45), Symphony Op. 21; Weill (28) <i>Das Berliner Requiem</i> .
1929	55	Composes 'Verbundenheit' in April. <i>Die glückliche Hand</i> performed in Duisberg (July) and Vienna, 2 Sept. In Oct. begins <i>Begleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene</i> . Norbert von Hanneenheim (31) becomes a pupil.	Edison Denisov born, April 6; Halm (69) dies, Feb. 1. First perf. of Weill-Hindemith, <i>Der Lindberghflug</i> , July 27. Bush (29) writes <i>Dialectic</i> ; Foulds (49) completes <i>Dynamic Triptych</i> ; Zemlinsky (58), <i>Symphonische Gesänge</i> . Wall Street Crash (Oct. 23) precipitates worldwide economic crisis.

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1930	56	First perf. of <i>Von heute auf Morgen</i> (Frankfurt, Feb. 1). Completes <i>Begleitungsmusik</i> on Feb. 14 (premiered on Frankfurt Radio under Hans Rosbaud in April) and the <i>Six Pieces for Male Chorus</i> in March. Begins composing <i>Moses und Aron</i> on May 7. <i>Erwartung</i> and <i>Die glückliche Hand</i> performed as a double bill at the Krolloper, Berlin under Klemperer (45), June 7.	Heseltine (36) dies, Dec. 17; Karetnikov born, June 28; Schnebel born, March 14; Takemitsu born, Oct. 8. Foulds (50) completes <i>Three Mantras</i> ; Holst (56) composes <i>Choral Fantasia</i> ; Sorabji (38) <i>Opus Clavicembalisticum</i> ; Zemlinsky (59), <i>Die Kreidekreis</i> . First perfs. of Stravinsky, <i>Symphony of Psalms</i> , Dec. 13; Vaughan Williams, <i>Job</i> , Oct. 23; Weill, <i>Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahaganny</i> , March 9, and <i>Der Jasager</i> , June 23; Eisler, <i>Die Massnahme</i> , Dec. 10. Four and a half million unemployed in Germany.
1931	57	Conducts <i>Erwartung</i> for the BBC in London, Jan. 9. For health reasons, spends May–Sept. in Territet (Montreux), then moves on to Spain; with help from Gerhard (35) rents a villa in Barcelona (Bajada de Briz 14), where he works on <i>Moses und Aron</i> .	Gubaidulina born, Oct. 24; d'Indy (80) dies, Dec. 2; Kagel born, Dec. 24; Nielsen (66) dies, Oct. 2. First perf. of Hindemith, <i>Konzertmusik</i> for strings and brass. Bridge (52) composes <i>Phantasm</i> , Szymanowski (48), <i>Hamasie</i> .
1932	58	First perf. of the Op. 22 Orchestral Songs (Berlin, Feb. 21). Webern (49) conducts <i>Begleitungsmusik</i> in Barcelona on 7 April in a concert series featuring Schoenberg directed by Pablo Casals (56). Completes Act 2 of <i>Moses und Aron</i> in Barcelona, March 10. Daughter Nuria born, May 7. Returns to Berlin (June) and winters there despite poor health and bad political situation. Meets Henry Cowell (35). Begins Cello Concerto in Nov.	d'Albert (68) dies, March 13; Alexander Goehr born, Aug. 10; Hugh Wood born, June 27. First perf. of Goldschmidt, <i>Der gewaltige Hahnrei</i> ; Markevitch, <i>Rébus</i> , Dec. 15; Weill, <i>Die Bürgschaft</i> , March 10. Brian (56) completes Symphony No. 3. Aldous Huxley publishes <i>Brave New World</i> .
1933	59	Completes the Cello Concerto, Jan. 4 (premiere Feb. 5, BBC	Duparc (85) dies, Feb. 13; Penderecki born, Nov. 23;

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
		<p>broadcast with Antonio Sala, conducted by Edward Clark) and composes <i>Three Songs</i>, Op. 48 (Jan.–Feb.). Conducts <i>Variations for Orchestra</i> in London with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, 8 Feb. After the Nazis attain power (Jan. 30) he becomes <i>persona ingratis</i> at the Berlin Academy because of his race and teaching. He leaves the institution on 1 March, though his contract is not formally revoked until May. His bank accounts are frozen. Leaves Berlin for Paris, May 17, where he formally rejoins the Jewish religion, July 24. Completes the String Quartet Concerto on Aug. 16. Sails with his wife and daughter for the United States on Oct. 25; arrives New York on Oct. 31 and settles in Boston to teach at the Malkin Conservatoire.</p>	<p>Schillings (65) dies, July 23. Brian (57) completes Symphony No. 4 (<i>Das Siegeslied</i>), Koechlin (66) the <i>Seven Stars Symphony</i>, Franz Schmidt (59) Symphony No. 4, Strauss (69) <i>Arabella</i> (first perf. July 1). First perf. of Markevitch, <i>L'Envol d'Icare</i>, 26 June; Weill, <i>Der Silbersee</i>, Feb. 18. Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany; Nazis seize power March 23.</p>
1934	60	<p>Gives his first English-language lecture on twelve-tone composition at Princeton, 6 March. Meets Albert Einstein (55). Conducts <i>Pelleas</i> on March 16 in Boston, and lectures at the University of Chicago. Poor health forces him to move to New York (March), then Chautauqua (summer) and finally Los Angeles. Writes and lectures about the situation of the Jews in Europe. Composes <i>Suite in G</i> for strings (Sept.–Dec.). Premiere of String Quartet Concerto Sept. 26, Prague radio, with Kolisch Quartet).</p>	<p>Birtwistle born, July 15; Peter Maxwell Davies born, Sept. 8; Delius (72) dies, June 10; Elgar (76) dies, Feb. 23; Holst (60) dies, May 25; Schnittke born, Nov. 24; Schreker (55) dies, March 21. Krenek (34) completes <i>Karl V</i>; Varèse (51) <i>Ecuatorial</i>, Webern (51) Concerto Op. 24; Weill (34) Symphony No. 2. Hitler becomes President of Germany; Austrian chancellor Dollfuss assassinated, July.</p>

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1935	61	New arrangement of Chamber Symphony No. 1 for orchestra (April); begins the Violin Concerto. Summer composition seminar at the University of Southern California. Health and financial position improve. Gives private lessons to—among others—John Cage (22), Gerald Strang (27), Oscar Levant (29), Alfred Newman (35), and Leonard Stein (19). Meets Charlie Chaplin (46).	Berg (50) dies, Dec. 24 (completes the Violin Concerto and leaves <i>Lulu</i> unfinished); Dukas (69) dies, May 18; Lachenmann born, Nov. 27; Loeffler (74) dies, May 19; Schwertsik born, June 25; Suk (61) dies, May 29. First perfs. of Markevitch, <i>Le Paradis perdu</i> , 20 Dec.; Vaughan Williams, Symphony No. 4, April 10; Walton, Symphony No. 1 (complete), Nov. 6. Hindemith (40) completes <i>Mathis der Maler</i> ; Zemlinsky (64) composes <i>Psalm 13</i> . Nazi 'Nuremberg Laws' (Sept. 15) deprive Jews of basic civil rights.
1936	62	<i>Suite in G</i> premiered in Los Angeles (May 18) under Klemperer (51). Composes String Quartet No. 4 (April–July) and completes Violin Concerto on Sept. 23. Appointed Professor of Music at the University of California, Los Angeles. Settles at 116 North Rockingham Avenue in Brentwood, West Los Angeles. Becomes friendly with Gershwin (38).	David Blake born, Sept. 2; Cardew born, May 7; van Dieren (51) dies, April 24; Glazunov (70) dies, March 21; Reich (Steve) born, Oct. 3; Respighi (56) dies, April 18. Goldschmidt (33) completes <i>Ciaccona Sinfonica</i> and writes String Quartet No. 2. Spanish Civil War begins, July.
1937	63	String Quartets Nos. 1–4 performed by the Kolisch Quartet at UCLA, Jan. 4–8 and privately recorded at United Artists sound studio in Hollywood. Sketches a 'Jewish Symphony' (Jan.–Feb.); orchestrates Brahms's G minor Piano Quartet. Birth of son Ronald, May 26. Begins a textbook (later <i>Fundamentals of Musical Composition</i>). Teaches and travels.	Gershwin (38) dies, July 11; Glass (Philip) born, Jan. 31; Ravel (62) dies, Dec. 28; Roussel (68) dies, Aug. 23; Szymanowski (54) dies, March 29. First perfs. of Bartók, <i>Music for strings, percussion and celesta</i> , Jan. 21; Kaprálová, <i>Military Sinfonietta</i> , Nov.; Rachmaninov, Symphony No. 3, Nov. 6; Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5, Oct. 21. Guernica destroyed by air bombardment, April 27. Japanese invasion of China.

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1938	64	Brahms orchestration premiered in Los Angeles (May 7—Brahms's birthday) conducted by Klemperer (53). Schoenberg's music a prime exhibit in the Nazi exhibition of 'Entartete Kunst' (Degenerate Art) in Düsseldorf. Composes <i>Kol Nidre</i> , Op. 39 (Aug.–Sept. 22, first perf. Oct. 4 in Los Angeles). Dika Newlin (14) joins his UCLA class in autumn.	Martinů (44) composes Double Concerto; Franz Schmidt (64) completes <i>Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln</i> ; Webern (55) String Quartet Op. 28; Zemlinsky (67) ceases work on <i>Der König Candaules</i> . First perf. of Hindemith, <i>Nobilissima Visione</i> , July 21; Markevitch, <i>Le Nouvel âge</i> , Jan. 21. Austria annexed by Germany, March 14.
1939	65	Completes Chamber Symphony No. 2, Op. 38, on Oct. 21—thirty-three years after beginning it.	Foulds (58) dies, April 24; Godowsky (68) dies, Nov. 21; Grosz (43) dies, Dec. 10; Holliger born, May 21; Franz Schmidt (64) dies, Feb. 11. Koechlin (72) composes <i>Les Bandar-Log</i> ; Webern (56), Cantata No. 1. Fall of Spanish republic and imposition of Franco dictatorship, March 28. Non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia, Aug. 23. Second World War begins, Sept. 1.
1940	66	Conducts <i>Pierrot Lunaire</i> in New York and for a commercial recording (Sept.–Oct.). First perf. of Violin Concerto (Dec. 6, Philadelphia, played by Louis Krasner) and Chamber Symphony No. 2 (Dec. 15, New York, conducted by Fritz Steidry). Alma Mahler (63, now married to Franz Werfel, 50) moves to Beverly Hills and their friendship resumes.	Kaprálková (25) dies, June 16; Revueltas (39) dies, Oct. 5; Tovey (64) dies, July 10. Eisler (42) completes the <i>Deutsche Sinfonie</i> , Webern (57), <i>Variations</i> for orchestra, Op. 30. Fall of France, June 22. Air bombardment of London begins. Nazi Party publishes <i>Lexicon der Juden in die Musik</i> .
1941	67	Birth of son Lawrence, Jan. 27. Assumes American citizenship (as do Gertrud and Nuria) on April 11. Leaves an Organ Sonata unfinished (Aug.) but completes <i>Variations on a Recitative</i> on Oct. 12. Lectures on the twelve-note method at	Bridge (61) dies, Jan. 10; Paderewski (75) dies, June 29; Dallapiccola (37) completes <i>Canti di Prigionia</i> , Petrassi (37) composes <i>Coro di Morti</i> . First perf. of Weill, <i>Lady in the Dark</i> , Jan. 23. Hitler invades Russia, June 30. Japanese attack Hawaii

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
		UCLA Brother Heinrich (59) dies in a hospital in Salzburg.	and USA enters war, Dec. 7. Orson Welles makes <i>Citizen Kane</i> .
1942	68	Composes <i>Ode to Napoleon</i> (March–July 12) and Piano Concerto (July 5–Dec. 31). Also compiles textbook <i>Models for Beginners in Composition</i> (completed Sept. 12). Eisler (44) rejoins Schoenberg's social circle. Leonard Stein (26) becomes Schoenberg's principal teaching assistant.	Schulhoff (48) dies, Aug. 18; Zemlinsky (70) dies, March 16. First perf. of Strauss, <i>Capriccio</i> , Oct. 28. Blacher (39) completes <i>Der Grossinquisitor</i> ; Hindemith (47) <i>Ludus Tonalis</i> . Wannsee Conference, Berlin adopts 'Final Solution' regarding the Jews, Jan. Russian victory at Stalingrad, Nov.
1943	69	Completes <i>Theme and Variations</i> for wind band (or orchestra) on Aug. 24. Lou Harrison (26) becomes a pupil.	Gruber born, Jan. 3; Robin Holloway born, Oct. 19; Bill Hopkins born, June 5; David Matthews born, March 9. Klein (23), Piano Sonata; Rachmaninov (69) dies, March 28. Bartók (62) composes <i>Concerto for orchestra</i> ; Skalkottas (39), Suite No. 2; Shostakovich (37), Symphony No. 8; Ullmann (45), <i>Der Kaiser von Atlantis</i> ; Webern (60), Cantata No. 2.
1944	70	Premiere of Piano Concerto (Feb. 6, NBC Radio broadcast), with Steuermann (52) as soloist, conducted by Stokowski (62). Health deteriorates badly this month, and on Sept. 13 he is compelled by statute to retire from UCLA on a pitifully small pension. His seventieth birthday celebrated by many perfs. of his works, including premieres of <i>Theme and Variations</i> under Koussevitsky (Oct. 20, Boston) and <i>Ode to Napoleon</i> (Nov. 23, New York, orchestral version conducted by Artur Rodzinski). Begins, but does not persist in, a revision of <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> (Oct.–Dec.).	Höller born, Jan. 11; Roslavets (63) dies (date uncertain); Ullmann (46) killed, Oct. 18; Haverгал Brian (68) completes <i>Prometheus Unbound</i> ; Copland (44), <i>Appalachian Spring</i> ; Klein (24) String Trio; Koechlin (77), Symphony No. 2; Messiaen (36), <i>Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jesus</i> ; Spinner (36), <i>Overture for Schoenberg's 70th Birthday</i> ; Wolpe (41), <i>Battle Piece</i> . Allies invade Europe, June 6. Failure of Stauffenberg plot to assassinate Hitler, July 20. Warsaw Uprising, Aug. 1–Oct. 2.

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1945	71	Financial straits compel him to continue giving private lessons. The Guggenheim Foundation refuses his application for monetary assistance to complete <i>Moses und Aron</i> , <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> and textbooks. Composes <i>Prelude</i> , Op. 44 (Sept., premiered Nov. 18, Los Angeles as part of the composite <i>Genesis Suite</i>).	Bartók (64) dies, Sept. 26; Hannenheim (47) dies, Sept. 29; Klein killed, Jan. ?; Mascagni (81) dies, Aug. 2; Webern (62) killed, Sept. 15. Blacher (42) composes Concerto for strings and percussion; Skalkottas (41) <i>The Return of Ulysses</i> ; Strauss (81), <i>Metamorphosen</i> ; Vogel (49) completes <i>Thyl Claes</i> . Soviet troops liberate Auschwitz, Jan. 14. End of European war, May 8. Atomic bomb used against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Aug. 6 and 9. Japanese surrender, Aug. 15
1946	72	Three public lectures at the University of Chicago (May). Formal invitation to visit Vienna, and appointed Honorary President of the International Society for Contemporary Music. Suffers a near-fatal heart-attack, Aug. 2; composes String Trio (Aug. 20–Sept. 23). Honorary Doctorate from Princeton University, not conferred because he is unable to attend the ceremony.	Bantock (78) dies, Oct. 16; Falla (69) dies, Nov. 14; Klenau (63) dies, Aug. 31; Ethel Smyth (86) dies, 10 May. First perf. of Hindemith, <i>Requiem</i> , May 5. Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech in Missouri, March 5. Trial of Nazi leaders in Nuremberg.
1947	73	Health improves. Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters and receives their Award of Merit (April). Composes <i>A Survivor from Warsaw</i> , Aug. 11–23, to a commission from the Koussevitsky Foundation (first perf. Nov. 4 in Albuquerque). Works on essays and the textbook <i>Structural Functions of Harmony</i> .	Adams born, Feb. 15; Casella (63) dies, March 5; Pijper (52) dies, March 19; Skempton born, Oct. 31. Blacher (44) composes <i>Paganini Variations</i> ; Gerhard (51) <i>The Duenna</i> , Prokofiev (56), Symphony No. 6; Seiber (42), <i>Ulysses</i> ; Spinner (41), Piano Concerto; Grainger (65) completes his <i>Jungle Book Cycle</i> (begun in 1898); Thomas Mann (62) writes <i>Doktor Faustus</i> .

Year	Age	Life	Contemporary Musicians and Events
1948	74	Arranges <i>Three Folksongs</i> for chorus, Op. 49, in June. Quarrel with Thomas Mann (73) over his novel <i>Doktor Faustus</i> (Nov.—lasts till 1950).	Wolf-Ferrari (72) dies, Jan. 21. Havergal Brian (72) composes Symphony No. 7; Dallapiccola (44), <i>Il Prigioniero</i> ; Messiaen (40), <i>Turangalila-Symphonie</i> . George Orwell writes 1984.
1949	75	Composes <i>Phantasy</i> for violin, Op. 47 (March 3–22); <i>Dreimal Tausend Jahre</i> Op. 50A (completed April 20); and works (March–June) on <i>Israel Exists Again</i> , which remains unfinished. Poor health prevents his attending seventy-fifth birthday celebrations in Europe but attends premiere of violin <i>Phantasy</i> in Los Angeles on Sept. 13; he is named an honorary citizen of Vienna (Sept. 14).	Novák (78) dies, July 18; Pfitzner (80) dies, May 22; Skalkottas (45) dies, Sept. 19; Strauss (85) dies, Sept. 8.
1950	76	Composes <i>De Profundis</i> , Op. 50B (June–July); starts writing the texts of the 'Modern Psalms' and composes music for the first of them, Op. 50C (begun Oct. 2, not completed). Ill again. Financial difficulties compel him to sell some original manuscripts to the Library of Congress. Essay-collection <i>Style and Idea</i> published.	Koechlin (83) dies, Dec. 31; Miaskovsky (60) dies, Aug. 8; Weill (50) dies, April 3. Korngold (53) completes Symphony in F sharp. Korean War begins. Hydrogen bomb exploded.
1951	(76)	Elected Honourary President of the Israel Academy of Music in Jerusalem (April). Donates his correspondence to the Library of Congress. The 'Dance round the Golden Calf', first part of <i>Moses und Aron</i> to be performed, is premiered on July 2 in Darmstadt under Scherchen (60). Continues writing psalm-texts until his death at home in Brentwood, July 13.	Lambert (43) dies, Aug. 21; Medtner (71) dies, Nov. 13. Adams aged 4; Antheil 51; Atterberg 64; Babbitt 35; Ben-Haim 54; Berio 25; Berkeley 48; Birtwistle 17; Blacher 48; Blake 15; Bliss 59; Bloch 70; Boughton 73; Boulez 26; Braga Santos 27 (writes Symphony No.4); Brian 75 (completes <i>Turandot</i> , May 18); Britten 37; Bush 50 (completes <i>Wat Tyler</i>); Cage 38; Cardew 15; Carillo 76; Carter 42 (completes String Quartet No. 1);

Year Age Life

Contemporary Musicians
and Events

Castelnuovo-Tedesco 55;
 Charpentier 90; Chavéz 52;
 Copland 50; Cowell 54; Ruth
 Crawford 50; Dallapiccola 47;
 Davies 17; Denisov 22; Dessau
 56; Dohnányi 74; Dutilleux 35;
 Egk 51; von Einem 33; Eisler 53;
 Enescu 69; Feldman 26; Finzi 49;
 Fortner 43; Frankel 45 (writes
 Violin Concerto *In memory of the*
'six million'); Freitas Branco 61;
 Fricker 30; Gerhard 54;
 Ginastera 35; Glass 14; Glière 76;
 Goehr 19; Goldschmidt 48
 (completes *Beatrice Cenci*);
 Grainger 69; Gruber 8;
 Gubaidulina 19; Hába 58; Harris
 53; Hartmann 45; Hauer 68;
 Henze 25; Hindemith 55
 (completes Symphony *Die*
Harmonie der Welt); Holbrooke
 72; Höller 7; Holliger 12;
 Holloway 7; Holmboe 41;
 Honegger 59; Hopkins 8;
 Hovhaness 40; Howells 58;
 Ireland 71; Ives 76; Jolivet 45;
 Kabeláč 42; Kagel 19;
 Karetnikov 21; Khachaturian 47;
 Kilpinen 59; Kirchner 32; Klebe
 26; Kodaly 68; Korngold 54;
 Krenek 50; Lachenmann 15;
 Ligeti 28; Lutoslawski 38;
 Lutyens 45; Maderna 31;
 Malipiero 69; Marek 60; Martin
 61; Martinů 61; Matthews 8;
 Maw 16; Aare Merikanto 53;
 Messiaen 42 (completes *Livre*
d'Orgue); Milhaud 58;
 Nancarrow 40; Nono 27;
 Nystrom 61; Orff 56; Panufnik
 36; Penderecki 18; Petrassi 46;
 Petterson 40; Piston 57; Pizzeti
 70; Poulenc 52; Prokofiev 60;
 Rankl 52 (completes *Deirdre of*

Year Age Life

Contemporary Musicians
and Events

the Sorrows); Rawsthorne 46;
Reich 14; Riegger 66;
Rochberg 33; Rosenberg 59;
Rubbra 50; Ruggles 75;
Saeverud 54; Scelsi 46; Schiske
35; Schmitt 80; Schnebel 21;
Schnittke 16; Schoeck 64;
Schuman 40; Schwertsik 16;
Cyril Scott 71; F.G. Scott 71;
Searle 35; Seiber 46; Sessions 54;
Shaw 27; Shostakovich 45
(completes *24 Preludes & Fugues*);
Simpson 30; Skempton 3;
Sorabji 58; Spinner 45;
Stevenson 23; Stockhausen 22;
Stravinsky 69 (completes *The
Rake's Progress*, April 7);
Takemitsu 20; Tal 40; Tiessen
64; Tippett 56; Valen 63; Varèse
67; Vaughan Williams 78 (first
perf. of *The Pilgrim's Progress*,
April 26); Vermeulen 63; Villa-
Lobos 64; Vlad 31; Vogel 55;
Wagner-Régeny 47; Walton 49;
Wellesz 65; Wood 19; Wolpe
48; Xenakis 29; Zillig 46;
Zimmermann 33.



List of Works

For a more detailed catalogue the reader is referred to Josef Rufer's *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg* (London, 1962); for yet fuller listing of the works up to 1933, to Volume I of *Studien zur Entwicklung des dodekaphonen Satzes bei Arnold Schönberg* by Jan Maegaard (Copenhagen, 1972). Reasons of space have led me to omit all but the most important of Schoenberg's many unfinished and fragmentary compositions, even though many of these have now been published and recorded. By contrast, I have given a much fuller listing of his early (pre-1897) works than in the first edition of this book. Full publication details would take up inordinate space, but virtually all of the material here catalogued has appeared, or is scheduled to appear, along with supplementary materials and editorial reports, in the Arnold Schoenberg Complete Edition (*Gesamtausgabe*) issued under the joint imprint of B. Schott's Söhne, Mainz and Universal Edition AG, Vienna, which is still (2005) in process of publication and revision. The current status of the Complete Edition is shown on the Website of the Arnold Schönberg Center (<http://www.schoenberg.at>) and it should be noted that many of Schoenberg's manuscripts, including fragments and sketches, are available online at the same Web address.

There exist many arrangements of individual Schoenberg works by other hands, mainly undertaken to increase their chances of performance across different media. Of these I only note the arrangements most likely to be encountered in concert or in recordings.

Texts of vocal works, where not otherwise indicated, are Schoenberg's own.

Stage Works

Erwartung, Op. 17. Monodrama in one act, libretto by Marie Pappenheim (1909)

Die glückliche Hand, Op. 18. Drama with music in one act (1910–13)

Von heute auf Morgen, Op. 32. Opera in one act, libretto by Gertrud Schoenberg ('Max Blonda') (1928–9)

Moses und Aron. Opera in three acts. *Unfinished* (1930–2)

Voices and Orchestra

Gurrelieder (Jacobsen) for soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone, bass, reciter, chorus and orchestra (1900–01; orchestrated 1901–03, 1910–11)

Darthulas Grabgesang (Herder, after ‘Ossian’) for soli, chorus and orchestra. *Unfinished* (1903)

Symphony (Dehmel, Tagore, Schoenberg, the Bible) for soli, chorus and orchestra. *Unfinished* (1912–14)

Die Jakobsleiter. Oratorio for soli, chorus and orchestra. *Unfinished* (1917–22, 1944; performing version by Winfried Zillig, 1958)

Kol Nidre, Op. 39 for speaker, chorus and orchestra (1938)

A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46 for speaker, male chorus and orchestra (1947)

Israel Exists Again for chorus and orchestra. *Unfinished* (1949)

Modern Psalm, Op. 50C for speaker, chorus and orchestra. *Unfinished* (1950)

Solo Voice and Orchestra or String Orchestra

Six Orchestral Songs, Op. 8 (1903–5)

1. *Natur* (Hart); 2. *Das Wappenschild*; 3. *Sehnsucht* (Das Knaben Wunderhorn); 4. *Nie ward’ ich, Herrin, müd*; 5. *Voll jener Süsse*; 6. *Wenn Vöglein klagen* (Petrarch)

String Quartet No. 2, Op. 10 (1907–8), version for string orchestra with soprano (1922, revised 1929)

Four Orchestral Songs, Op. 22 (1913–16)

1. *Seraphita* (Dowson trs. George); 2. *Alle, welche dich suchen*; 3. *Mach mich zum Wächter deiner Weiten*; 4. *Vorgefühl* (Rilke)

Chorus with or without Ensemble

Viel tausend Blümlein auf der Au (poet unknown) for mixed chorus a cappella (undated; mid 1890s?)

Friedlicher Abend senkt sich aufs Gefilde (Lenau) for mixed chorus a cappella (1896?)

Wann weder Mond und Stern am Himmel scheint (Pfau) for mixed chorus and wind instruments (fragment, 1897)

Ei, du Lütte (Groth) for male chorus a cappella (undated; late 1890s?)

Wie das Kriegsvolk von Georg von Fronsberg singt (Des Knaben Wunderhorn) for male chorus a cappella (fragment, 1905)

Friede auf Erden (Meyer), Op. 13 for mixed chorus a cappella (1907; optional accompaniment of wind instruments added 1911)

Four Pieces for mixed chorus, Op. 27—with clarinet, mandolin, violin and cello in No. 4 (1925)

1. *Unentrinnbar*; 2. *Du sollst nicht, du musst*; 3. *Mond und Menschen* (Bethge, after Tschan-Jo-Su); 4. *Der Wunsch des Liebhabers* (Bethge, after Hung-so-Fan)

Three Satires, Op. 28 for mixed chorus—with viola, cello and piano in No. 3 and an Appendix for mixed chorus and string quartet (1925–6)

1. *Am Scheideweg*; 2. *Vielseitigkeit*; 3. *Der neu Klassizismus*; Appendix: 1. *Ein Spruch und zwei Variationen über ihn*; 2. Canon for string quartet; 3. *Legitimation als Canon*

Three Folksongs for mixed chorus (1929)

1. *Es gingen zwei Gespielen gut*; 2. *Herzlich Leib, durch Scheiden*; 3. *Schein uns, du liebe Sonne*

Six Pieces for male chorus, Op. 35 (1929–30)

1. *Hemmung*; 2. *Das Gesetz*; 3. *Ausdrucksweise*; 4. *Glück*; 5. *Landsknechte*; 6. *Verbundenheit*

Three Folksongs, Op. 49 for mixed chorus (1948)

1. *Es gingen zwei Gespielen gut*; 2. *Der Mai tritt ein mit Freuden*; 3. *Mein Herz in steten Treuen*

Dreimal Tausend Jahre (Runes) for mixed chorus, Op. 50A (1949) *De Profundis* (Psalm 130) for mixed chorus, Op. 50B (1950)

Solo Voice and Ensemble

Es ist ein Flüstern in die Nacht (poet unknown) for tenor and string quartet (c. 1896)

Nachtwandler (Falke), *Brettli-lied* for voice, piccolo, trumpet, snaredrum and piano (1901)

Herzegewächse (Maeterlinck), Op. 20 for high soprano, harp, celesta and harmonium (1911)

Pierrot Lunaire (Guiraud trs. Hartleben), Op. 21: three times seven melodramas for reciter, piano, flute (piccolo), clarinet (bass clarinet), violin (viola) and cello (1912)

Lied der Waldtaube (Jacobsen) for mezzo-soprano, seventeen instruments and percussion (arr. 1922 from *Gurrelieder*)

Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte (Byron), Op. 41 for reciter, piano and string quartet (1942; also version with string orchestra, Op. 41B)

Songs with Piano

Titles marked * were collected by Schoenberg in a manuscript volume entitled *erste Lieder*; those marked + have been published in a posthumous collection edited by Leonard Stein under the title *7 Frühe Lieder* (7 Early Songs). With the exception of *Juble, schöne junge Rose* and *Ecloge*, of which two strophes are entire, I do not list fragments among the very early songs.

In hellen Träumen hab' ich Dich oft geschaut (Gold) (1893)

Ein Schilflied (Lenau) (1893)

Du kehrt mir den Rücken (Pfau) (1893)*

Gott grüss dich Marie! (Pfau) (1893)*

Mein Schatz ist wie ein Schneck (Pfau) (1893)*

Der Pflanze, die dort über dem Abgrund schwebt (Pfau) (1893)*

Warum bist du aufgewacht (Pfau) (period 1893–4)

Dass gestern eine Wespe dich (poet unknown) (period 1893–4?)

Juble, schöne junge Rose (Pfau) (incomplete; period 1893–4?)

Im Fliederbusch ein Vöglein sass (Reinick) (period 1894–6)*

Dass schon die Maienzeit vorüber (Christen) (period 1894–6)*

Könnst' ich zu dir, mein Licht (Pfau) (period 1894–6)*

Das zerbrochene Krüglein (Greif) (period 1894–6?)

Mein Herz das ist ein tiefer Schacht (poet unknown) (period 1894–6)*+

Waldesnacht (Heyse) (period 1894–6)+

Nur das thut mir so bitter weh (von Redwitz) (period 1894–6)

Zweifler (Pfau) (1895?)*

Einsam bin ich und allein (Pfau) (1896)*

Lied der Schmitterin (Pfau) (1896)

Ich grüne wie die Weide grünt (Wackernagel) (1896)*

Eloge (Dufreich ist die Erde) (Adler¹) (incomplete; period 1896–7)

Madchenfrühling (Dehmel) (1897)+

Nicht doch! (Dehmel) (c. 1897)+

Mädchenlied (Heyse) (period 1897–1900)+

Mannesbängen (Dehmel) (c. 1899)+

Two Songs (von Levetzow), Op. 1 for baritone (c. 1898) 1. *Dank*; 2. *Abscheid*

Die Beiden (Hofmannsthal) (1899)

Mailed (Goethe) (1899)

Four Songs, Op. 2 (2 and 4 undated; 1 and 3 dated 1899)

1. *Erwartung*; 2. *Schenk mir deinen goldenen Kamm*; 3. *Erhebung* (Dehmel); 4. *Waldsonne* (Schlaf)

Gruss in die Ferne (Lingg) (1900)

Brettli-lieder (1901)

- Der genügsame Liebhaber* (Salus); *Einfältiges Lied* (Salus); *Jedem das Seine* (Colly); *Mahnung* (Hochstetter); *Galathea* (Wedekind); *Gigerlette* (Bierbaum); *Seit ich so viel Weiber sah*, from *Spiegel von Arcadia* (Schikaneder)

Six Songs, Op. 3 (1899–1903)

1. *Wie Georg von Frundsberg von sich selber sang* (Des Knaben Wunderhorn); 2. *Die Aufgeregten* (Keller); 3. *Warnung* (Dehmel); 4. *Hochzeitslied* (Jacobsen); 5. *Geübtes Herz* (Keller); 6. *Freithold* (Lingg)

Deinem Blick zu mich bequemen (Goethe) (1903).

Eight Songs, Op. 6 (1903–5)

1. *Traumleben* (Hart); 2. *Alles* (Dehmel); 3. *Mädchenlied* (Remer); 4. *Verlassen* (Conradi); 5. *Ghasel* (Keller); 6. *Am Wegrand* (Mackay); 7. *Lockung* (Aram); 8. *Der Wanderer* (Nietzsche)

Gedenken (poet unknown) (undated; mid-1900's?)

Two Ballads, Op. 12 (1907)

1. *Jane Grey* (Amman); 2. *Der verlorene Haufen* (Klemperer)

Jeduch. Ballad (Löns). *Unfinished* (1907)

Mignon (Goethe). *Unfinished* (1907)

Two Songs, Op. 14 (1907–8)

1. *Ich darf nicht dankend* (George); 2. *In diesen Wintertagen* (Henckel)

Friedesabend (George). *Unfinished* (1908)

Das Buch der hängenden Garten, Op. 15. Song-cycle on fifteen verses from Stefan George's 'The Book of the Hanging Gardens', for high voice (1908–9)

Am Strande (Rilke) (1909)

Four German Folksongs (1929)

1. *Der Mai tritt ein mit Freuden*; 2. *Es gingen zwei Gespielen gut*; 3. *Mein Herz in steten Treuen*; 4. *Mein Herz ist mir genenget*

Gesegne dich laub, German folksong (1929)

Three Songs (Haringer), Op. 48 for low voice (1993)

1. *Sommernüß*; 2. *Tot*; 3. *Mädchenlied*

¹The author is only identified as 'W.' on the manuscript but is in fact the Bohemian poet Friedrich Adler (1857–1938).

Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, String Orchestra

- Notturmo* in A flat, for solo violin, string orchestra and harp (1895)
Serenade in D major, for small orchestra. *Unfinished* (1896)
Gavotte und Musette (im alten Style), for string orchestra (1897)
Waltzes for string orchestra. *Unfinished* (1897)
Frühlings Tod, Symphonic Poem after Lenau. (Short score complete, full score *unfinished*, 1898)
Verklärte Nacht, string sextet, Op. 4 (1899), versions for string orchestra (1916; 1943)
Symphony in G minor (fragment, 1900)
Pelleas und Melisande, Op. 5. Symphonic Poem, after Maeterlinck (1902–3)
Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op. 9, for fifteen instruments (1906; version for orchestra (multiple strings), 1922; second, revised version for full orchestra, Op. 9B, 1935; NB version for five instruments—flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano, or piano quintet—by Anton Webern, 1922–3)
Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16 (1909; revised 1922; revised again, for slightly reduced orchestra, 1949; version for chamber ensemble, by 1920; version for chamber ensemble by Felix Greissle, by 1925)
Three Little Pieces for chamber orchestra, No. 3 *unfinished* (1910)
Variations for orchestra, Op. 31 (1926; 1928)
Beleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene, for orchestra, Op. 34 (1929–30)
Suite in G major (*Suite im alten Stile*), for string orchestra (1934)
Symphony. Project (sometimes referred to as ‘Jewish Symphony’; beginnings of all four movements sketched) (1937)
Chamber Symphony No. 2 in E-flat minor, Op. 38, for small orchestra (1906–16; 1939; version for two pianos, Op. 38B, 1941)
Theme and Variations in G minor, for wind band, Op. 43A (1943; also version for full orchestra, Op. 43B)
Prelude (to the *Genesis Suite*), Op. 44, for orchestra with wordless chorus (1945)
Fanfare for a Bowl Concert on motifs of ‘Die Gurrelieder’, for brass and percussion (1945; *unfinished*, completed for performance by Leonard Stein)

Solo Instrument(s) and Orchestra

- Cello Concerto* in D major (after a harpsichord concerto by G. M. Monn) (1932–3)
Concerto for string quartet and orchestra in B flat (after Handel’s *Concerto Grosso* Op. 6, No. 7) (1993)
Violin Concerto, Op. 36 (1935–6)
Piano Concerto, Op. 42 (1942)

Chamber Music

- Piece* in D minor for violin and piano (undated: c 1893)
Presto in C Major, for string quartet (undated: perhaps 1894)
Scherzo in F major, for string quartet (1897)
String Quartet in D major (1897)
Verklärte Nacht. String Sextet, after Dehmel, Op. 4 (1899; versions for string orchestra arr. 1916, 1943; NB also version for piano trio by Edward Steuermann, 1932)
String Quartet No. 1 in D minor, Op. 7 (1904–5)

- Ein Stelldichein*, for oboe, clarinet, violin, cello and piano. *Unfinished*. (1905)
 String Quartet No. 2 in F sharp minor, Op. 10, with soprano (1907–8); version for string orchestra, 1922, revised 1929)
Serenade, Op. 24, for clarinet, bass clarinet, mandolin, guitar, violin, viola and cello, with baritone (1920–3)
 Wind Quintet, Op. 26 for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon (1923–4; String Quartet version, Op. 26A, begun and soon abandoned 1925; NB also version by Felix Greissle as Sonata for flute or clarinet or violin and piano, 1926; version by Henk Guittart for String Quintet, 1995)
 Suite (Septet), Op. 29, for piano, 3 clarinets, violin, viola and cello (1925–6)
 String Quartet No. 3, Op. 30 (1927)
 String Quartet No. 4, Op. 37 (1936)
 String Trio, Op. 45 (1946)
Phantasy, Op. 47, for violin with piano accompaniment (1949)

Organ

- Sonata. *Unfinished*. (1941)
Variations on a Recitative, in D minor, Op. 40 (1941)

Piano

- Lied ohne Worte* (c. 1891)
 Three Piano Pieces (1894)
 1. Andantino; 2. Andantino grazioso; 3. Presto
 Six Pieces for piano duet (1896)
 1. Andante grazioso; 2. Poco allegro; 3. Rasch; 4. Andante; 5. Lebhaft, rasch;
 6. Allegro molto
Alla Marcia in E flat (probably not originally intended as a piano piece) (undated; mid to late 1900s?)
 Three Piano Pieces, Op. 11 (1909)
 1. Mässig; 2. Mässig; 3. Bewegt
 Six Little Piano Pieces, Op. 19 (1911)
 1. Leicht, zart; 2. Langsam; 3. Sehr langsam; 4. Rasch, aber leicht; 5. Etwas rasch;
 6. Sehr langsam
 Five Piano Pieces, Op. 23 (1920–3)
 1. Sehr langsam; 2. Sehr rasch; 3. Langsam; 4. Schwungvoll; 5. Walzer
 Suite for piano, Op. 25 (1921–3)
 1. Präludium; 2. Gavotte & Musette; 3. Intermezzo; 4. Menuett & Trio; 5. Gigue
 Piano Piece in G. *Unfinished* (1925)
 Piano Piece, Op. 33A (1928–9)
 Piano Piece, Op. 33B (1931)

Occasional Works

- Der Deutsche Michel* (Kernstock). War-song for male chorus (1915?)
Der eiserne Brigade. March for piano and string quartet (1916)
Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr. Chorale-setting for alto, violin, cello and piano (between 1918 and 1925)

Weihnachtsmusik for 2 violins, cello harmonium and piano (1921)
Gerpa. Variations for horn, 2 violins, piano and harmonium. *Unfinished* (1922)

Canons:

(Schoenberg composed over thirty vocal or instrumental canons as occasional works or mental exercise; the most notable include those listed below. The *Appendix* to the *Satires*, Op. 28 comprises three more of the same kind.)

Three Canons on Proverbs of Goethe for four voices, No. 3 *unfinished* (1905)

1. *Wenn der schwer Gedrückte klagt*; 2. *O dass der Sinnen doch so viele sind*; 3. *Gutes tu Eyn doppelt Spiegel und Schlüssel-Canon auf niederländische Art* (A mirror- and clef-canon in Netherlands style) for four voices (1922)

Von meinen Steinen, Stein ('From my stones, Stein') for four voices (for Erwin Stein) (Christmas 1926)

Arnold Schönberg beglückwünscht herzlichst Concert Gebouw ('Arnold Schoenberg sincerely congratulates the Concert Gebouw'), canon in four keys, for four voices with a free fifth voice (for jubilee of the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam) (1928)

Riddle Canon in three keys, for three voices (for the Genossenschaft Deutscher Tonsetzer) (1928)

Mirror canon for two voices (to the philanthropist Hermann Abraham) (1931)

Mirror canon for string quartet (1931)

Double Canon in mirror form, for four voices (for Carl Moll) (1932)

Two Canons for three voices (1933, provided with English texts 1943 for the sixtieth birthday of Carl Engel)

1. *No man can escape*; 2. *I, too, was not better off*

Wer mit der Welt laufen will for 3 voices (for the sixtieth birthday of David J. Bach) (1934; uses a text of 1926 intended for a chorus)

Es ist zu dumm ('It is too stupid') for four voices (for Rudolph Ganz) (1934)

Man mag über Schönberg denken, wie man will ('One may think what one likes about Schoenberg') for four voices (for Charlotte Dieterle) (1935)

Double canon for four voices (1938)

Canon for Mr Saunders Christmas 1939 for four voices (for Richard Drake Saunders) (1939)

I am almost sure, when your nurse will change your diapers in three voices for four sopranos (for Artur Rodzinsky on the birth of his son Richard) (1945)

Endless canon for string quartet (for Thomas Mann on his seventieth birthday) (1945)

Gravitationszentrum eigenen Sonnensystems ('Centre of Gravity of its own solar system . . .') for four voices (1949)

Arrangements and Orchestrations

(The following list omits the 'several thousand pages' of operettas which Schoenberg is said to have scored in the late 1890s and early 1900s, except for those that have been identified with complete certainty; but in addition to these specified scores, Schoenberg is known to have orchestrated works by Victor Holländer, Richard Heuberger, Leo Fall, Edmund Eysler, and Franz Léhar.)

- Zemlinsky: *Sarema*, vocal score (in part) (1897)²
- Heinrich van Eycken: *Lied der Walküre*, arrangement for voice and orchestra (1902)
- Bogumil Zepler: *Mädchenreigen*, arrangement for three voices and orchestra (1902)
- Heinrich Schenker: *Synsche Tänze*, arrangement for orchestra (1903). *Lost*
- Robert Fischhof: *Ingeborg*, opera, orchestration and vocal score (in collaboration with Zemlinsky) (1904)
- Lortzing: *Der Waffenschmied von Worms*, pianoforte arrangement for four hands (1904)
- Rossini: *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, pianoforte arrangement for four hands of Overture and 15 numbers (1904)
- Schubert: *Rosamunde*, pianoforte arrangement for four hands of Entr'actes and Ballet Music (1904)
- Carl Löwe: *Der Nöck*, arrangement for voice and orchestra (1912)
- Beethoven: *Adelaide*, arrangement for voice and orchestra (1912)
- Schubert: Three Songs, arrangement for voice and orchestra (1912). *Lost*
- G. M. Monn: Cello Concerto in G minor, arrangement for cello and piano with cadenza by Schoenberg (1912)
- Zemlinsky: String Quartet No. 2, pianoforte arrangement for four hands. *Unfinished* (1915)
- Mahler: *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, arrangement for voice and chamber ensemble (1920)
- Reger: *Ein romantische Suite*, Op. 125, arrangement for flute, clarinet, string quartet, harmonium (four hands), and piano duet (1919–20, in collaboration with Rudolf Kolisch)
- Mahler: *Das Lied von der Erde*, arrangement for soprano and chamber ensemble. *Unfinished* (1921, in collaboration with Anton Webern; completed 1983 by Rainer Riehn)
- Johann Strauss II: *Roses from the South*, arrangement for piano, harmonium and string quartet (1921)
- Johann Strauss II: *Lagunenwalzer*, arrangement for piano, harmonium and string quartet (1921). *Lost*
- Schubert: *Ständchen*, arrangement for clarinet, bassoon, mandolin, guitar and string quartet (1921)
- Schubert: *Santa Lucia*, arrangement for violin, viola, cello, mandolin, guitar and piano; and two other short pieces (1921). *Lost*
- Luigi Denza: *Funiculi, funiculá*, arrangement for clarinet, mandolin, guitar, and string trio (1921)
- Johann Sioly: *Weil i a alter Drahrer bin*, arrangement for clarinet, mandolin, guitar, and string trio (1921)
- J. S. Bach: *Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*, arrangement for large orchestra (1922)
- J. S. Bach: *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele*, arrangement for large orchestra (1922)
- Johann Strauss II: *Kaiserwalzer*, arrangement for flute, clarinet, string quartet, and piano (1925)
- J. S. Bach: Prelude and Fugue in E-flat (from *Clavierübung*), arrangement for large orchestra (1928)

² Claims in certain older publications that Schoenberg wrote the libretto for this, Zemlinsky's first opera, are incorrect.

Brahms: Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor, arrangement for orchestra (1937)

Editions (realization of figured basses, 1911–12)

G. M. Monn: Symphonia a Quattro in A major; Cello Concerto in G minor; Harpischord Concerto in D major.

J. C. Mann: Diverimento in D major

Franz Tuma: Sinfonia a Quattro in E minor; Partita a Tre in C minor; Partita a Tre in A major; Partita a Tre in G major.

Literary Works and Textbooks

See Appendix D, Bibliography.



Personalia

Adler, Guido (1855–1941), Austrian musicologist, a pupil of Bruckner and friend of Mahler. He founded and became first director of the Institute for Musical History at Vienna University, where he was professor of musicology 1898–1927, in succession to Eduard Hanslick. Adler helped Schoenberg find his feet in Vienna on his return from Berlin in 1903, and encouraged his own students (e.g. Webern and Wellesz) to study with him. He was editor of the *Denkmaler der Tonkunst in Österreich*, for which Schoenberg, in 1912–13, contributed editions of works by eighteenth-century Viennese composers.

Adler, Oskar (1875–1955, no relation to Guido Adler), Austrian violinist, physician and esoteric savant, a close friend of Schoenberg from their schooldays, taught him the rudiments of music, gave him his first grounding in philosophy, and played chamber music with him. Though self-taught, Adler for many years led a string quartet whose regular cellist was another composer-friend, Franz Schmidt. Adler also played in Schoenberg's Society for Private Musical Performances, lectured on music and philosophy, as well as giving musical and spiritual advice to—and casting horoscopes for—many of Vienna's leading creative artists. He was the teacher of the musician, writer and Schoenberg-expert Hans Keller. After the *Anschluss* Schoenberg tried to arrange for Adler to come to California, but he escaped instead to Britain, spending the 1940s in the Lake District and his last years in London. His principal books were *Critique of Pure Music* (1918, still unpublished), and *The Testament of Astrology* (published in 3 volumes 1935–37, many subsequent editions).

Adorno, Theodor Wiesengrund- (1903–69), German post-Hegelian, semi-Marxist philosopher, polymath, composer and *Kultur-Kritik*; pupil of

Berg in Vienna and a member of Schoenberg's circle there and in Berlin. Emigrated to the USA in 1934. Adorno was Thomas Mann's musical adviser in the writing of *Doktor Faustus* and co-author with Hanns Eisler of the classic study *Composing for the Films*, published in 1947 as by Eisler alone. He returned to Germany in 1950 and taught at Frankfurt University. Adorno's musicological writings include studies of Berg and Mahler and *Die Philosophie der neuen Musik* (1949), a volume principally devoted to Schoenberg and Stravinsky which profoundly influenced the emergence of post-Webern serialists such as Boulez and Stockhausen. Schoenberg strongly disapproved of it.

Bach, David Josef (1874–1947), childhood and lifelong friend of Schoenberg (who was briefly engaged to his sister). He was music critic for the Viennese socialist newspaper *Arbeiterzeitung* and involved with the workers' choir movement. In 1905 he founded the Workers' Symphony Concerts. After the Great War Bach was cultural adviser to the Social Democratic Party in Vienna; he emigrated to London in 1938.

Bahr, Hermann (1863–1934), Austrian novelist, dramatist and critic, influenced by the French symbolists and a member of the Expressionist movement in literature. He was a friend of Schoenberg; his wife, the singer Anna Bahr-Mildenburg, was a member of the Court Opera company during Mahler's tenure in Vienna and gave some of the earliest performances of Schoenberg's songs.

Blitzstein, Marc (1905–64), American composer and pianist, pupil of Nadia Boulanger and Schoenberg. He was best known for his light operas and musicals (of pronounced left-wing political stance) *The Cradle Will Rock*, *No for an Answer* and *Regina*.

Bodansky, Artur (1877–1939), Viennese-born conductor, studied composition with Zemlinsky and became assistant to Mahler at the Hofoper. He and Schoenberg were friendly from the 1890s onwards. After conducting in Vienna, Prague and Mannheim, in 1914 he was appointed conductor of German repertoire at the Metropolitan Opera, New York and remained in this post, as colleague of Toscanini, for the rest of his life. He was a travelling-companion of the Schoenbergs on their voyage to America in 1933 and was instrumental in arranging Zemlinsky's emigration to the USA.

Brian, William Havergal (1876–1972), British composer and musical journalist. One of the most prolific symphonists of the twentieth century (he wrote thirty-two, as well as five operas and many other works), he was a spirited advocate of Schoenberg's music in British journals between the wars, and met him in 1928 when Schoenberg came to London to conduct the *Gurrelieder*.

Clark, Edward (1888–1962), British conductor and writer on music; pupil of Schoenberg in Berlin before World War I. A dedicated campaigner for

new music, he played a very active role as head of the Music Department in the early days of the BBC, not only for Schoenberg's circle but also for Bartók, Busoni, Stravinsky and others. Conducted the British premiere of Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony and the world premiere of the Cello Concerto. Husband of the composer Elisabeth Lutyens.

Dehmel, Richard (1863–1920), from Brandenburg, was perhaps the most discussed lyric poet in Germany before World War I. Schoenberg set several of Dehmel's poems; derived inspiration for *Verklärte Nacht* from a poem in his *Weib und Welt* (1896); and invited him to write the libretto for a proposed choral symphony (the final result was *Die Jakobsleiter*, to a text of Schoenberg's own).

Dick, Marcel (1898–1991) was a Hungarian violist and composer, great-nephew of the violinist Eduard Remenyi. He studied in Budapest with, among others, Zóltan Kodály. After serving in the Austro-Hungarian army and playing in the Budapest Philharmonic and Vienna Symphony Orchestras, he became a composition pupil of Schoenberg and a co-founder of the Wiener Quartet (later the Kolisch Quartet). In 1934 he came to the USA, and was principal violist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and then the Cleveland Orchestra. He later taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Kenyon College, and Case Western Reserve University. Dick composed many works, mainly influenced by Schoenberg's twelve-tone method, including a Symphony conducted by Dmitri Mitropoulos in 1950.

Eisler, Hanns (1898–1962), son of the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Eisler, was a pupil of Schoenberg 1919–23; though Schoenberg regarded him as one of his most gifted pupils they frequently clashed over Eisler's left-wing political affiliations. By 1927 his works began to reflect the aspirations of the revolutionary workers' movement, and he became one of Bertolt Brecht's chief collaborators in political songs, films and stage music. After several years of peripatetic exile he moved to the USA in 1938 and wrote many film scores (as well as a classic book on the subject in collaboration with Adorno), but in 1947 was summoned before the McCarthyite Un-American Activities Committee and deported. Eisler settled in East Berlin in 1950. He wrote an enormous amount of music of all kinds in a vast variety of styles, ranging from the simplest diatonicism to the twelve-note method.

Frederick, Kurt (1907–97) was the violist of the Kolisch Quartet from 1938 to 1942 and from 1945 to 1950 conducted the Albuquerque Symphony Orchestra, with which he gave the première of Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*.

George, Stefan (1868–1933), Rhineland poet who travelled widely and was much influenced by the French Symbolists. By his own example and through his periodical *Blätter für die Kunst* he brought about a purification

of German poetic diction. Died in voluntary exile, having refused honours from the Nazis. Schoenberg set several of his poems from *Der siebente Ring* (1907), above all in *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* and the Second String Quartet.

Gerhard, Robert (later Roberto) Juan René (1896–1970), born in Catalonia of mixed Alsatian and German-Swiss parentage, was probably the greatest Spanish composer of the twentieth century. A pupil of Granados and Pedrell, he studied with Schoenberg in Vienna and Berlin from 1923 to 1928, and was host to Schoenberg in 1931–2 during the composition of much of *Moses und Aron*, in Barcelona. After the Spanish Civil War, because of his connections with the Republican Government, he went into exile and settled in Cambridge. Like many Schoenberg pupils Gerhard came late to twelve-note composition, but applied it for very personal, exploratory ends. His works include four symphonies, an opera, the ballet *Don Quixote*, and much chamber music; it can justly be said that he contributed some of the finest music written anywhere in the two decades after Schoenberg's death.

Gerstl, Richard (1883–1908), Austrian Fauvist painter, born in Vienna. Virtually self-taught, he was greatly influenced by the work of Edvard Munch and began painting in 1903, producing mainly portraits and landscapes. He befriended and gave lessons to Schoenberg, whose own paintings show signs of his influence, and was the cause of Schoenberg's matrimonial crisis in 1908. Gerstl committed suicide the same year. In recent years he has come to be recognized as one of the most original and underrated painters of the early Expressionist period.

Goehr, Walter (1903–60), German conductor, born in Berlin, where he studied with Schoenberg, emigrating to Britain in 1933. He was conductor of the BBC Theatre Orchestra 1945–8. Goehr was a friend and early advocate of the music of Michael Tippett, who recruited him to the staff of Morley College, London, where he gave several important premieres including the first British performance of Monteverdi's *Vespers* and, at the Adelphi Theatre, the world premiere of Tippett's oratorio *A Child of Our Time*. Father of the composer Alexander Goehr.

Greissle, Felix (1894–1982), after war service during which he was captured and held prisoner in Sardinia, became a private student of Schoenberg in Vienna from 1920 and married his daughter Gertrud the following year. He was rehearsal coach for the Society for Private Musical Performances and conducted many of Schoenberg's works; he was also Schoenberg's preferred arranger. In 1938 Gertrud and he emigrated to the USA and Greissle worked in music publishing and later taught theory and composition at Columbia University. He left an unpublished biography of Schoenberg; his son, Arnold Greissle-Schoenberg, has published a memoir of the Schoenberg circle in Vienna.

Gütersloh, Albert Paris von (1887–1973), Austrian actor, author and painter, born Albert Kiehtreiber, became friendly with Schoenberg in Berlin when the latter was conducting at the *Überbrettl*. A friend also of Egon Schiele, after the first Blaue Reiter exhibition he arranged for Schoenberg to exhibit 23 pictures at a modern art exhibition in Budapest in 1912. In 1910 Gütersloh wrote one of the first German expressionist novels, *Die tanzende Törin*, and later worked as a designer of scenery for Max Reinhardt. He contributed an important essay on Schoenberg as painter to the 1912 Schoenberg *Festschrift* published by Piper Verlag. He was later an influential teacher at the Vienna Academy of Art.

Gutheil-Schoder, Marie (1874–1935), dramatic soprano who was one of the outstanding singer-actresses of the Vienna Opera during Mahler's reign; famous for her interpretation of the title-role in Strauss's *Elektra*. She was the soloist in the premieres of Schoenberg's Second String Quartet and *Erwartung*.

Hannenheim, Norbert Han von (1898–1945), born in Hermannstadt, Transylvania, was a member of the Germanic *Siebenbürger* community of northern Romania and a pupil in Schoenberg's Berlin Masterclass 1929–32. Schoenberg regarded him highly, calling him 'one of the most interesting personalities I have ever met'. Hannenheim was a prolific composer and espoused the 12-note method even as a student; he had works performed at pre-war ISCM Festivals (as a Romanian composer, since the ISCM was formally proscribed by the Nazi musical authorities). It was long believed that he perished in an air-raid on Berlin and that all his scores were destroyed, but songs, piano sonatas and string quartets have come to light in recent years, and it now appears that Hannenheim, who had intermittent but acute psychological problems, died in a clinic in Obrawalde in September 1945.

Hauer, Josef Matthias (1883–1959), self-taught Austrian composer and theorist who was writing freely chromatic music as early as 1908. By 1919, independently of Schoenberg, he had evolved a method of twelve-note composition involving forty-four 'tropes'—divisions of the 479,001,000 possible combinations of the twelve chromatic pitches, each twelve further divided into two six-note groups (hexachords). Schoenberg was interested in Hauer at a decisive period of his own development (they were in contact around 1918–25), and was arriving at his own twelve-note method at the same time as Hauer started issuing a series of theoretical pamphlets in the early 1920s. Despite the superficial similarities between Hauer's tropes and Schoenberg's twelve-tone rows, their methods proceeded from entirely different, almost antithetical premises. Hauer's output was voluminous (all his works after 1939 being titled simply *Zwölftonspiel*). In his last years he became a guru for some members of the post-war Austrian avant-garde, as a kind of 'anti-pope' to Schoenberg.

Horwitz, Karl (1884–1925) studied musicology with Guido Adler and was an early pupil of Schoenberg's in Vienna. He later worked as a répétiteur in Prague under Zemlinsky, 1911–14. Horwitz composed songs, string quartets and a symphonic poem, but went deaf in 1924 and died early the following year.

Jacobsen, Jens Peter (1847–85), Danish poet, novelist and story-writer, much concerned with liberating thought from Romantic dreams. His best-known works are the novels *Fru Marie Grubbe* (1876) and *Niels Lyhne* (1880). The *Gurresange*, set by Schoenberg as the *Gurrelieder*, is an episode in an early poetic cycle.

Jalowetz, Heinrich (1882–1946), a musicology pupil of Guido Adler, was among Schoenberg's first students in Vienna, 1904–1908. From 1909 to 1933 he worked as a conductor in Regensburg, Danzig, Stettin, Prague, Vienna and Cologne (as successor to Otto Klemperer). After emigrating to the USA in 1938 he taught at Black Mountain College, North Carolina. Though his name is less widely known than that of many of Schoenberg's more famous students, Schoenberg regarded Jalowetz very highly indeed. He is one of the seven 'Dead Friends' (the others being Berg, Webern, Zemlinsky, Franz Schreker, Karl Kraus and Adolf Loos) to whom he once envisaged dedicating his book *Style and Idea*, with the comment that those men 'belong to those with whom principles of music, art, artistic morality and civic morality need not be discussed. There was a silent and sound mutual understanding on all these matters'.

Kandinsky, Wassily (1866–1944), the Russian painter, playwright and art-theorist, studied in Munich. One of the principal leaders of the Expressionist movement in art, and one of the first Abstract painters. With Franz Marc, he organized the *Blaue Reiter* Exhibitions there (which included paintings by Schoenberg), and edited the *Blaue Reiter Almanac*, for which Schoenberg composed *Herzgewächse*. His drama *Der gelbe Klang* (1909) had some influence on Schoenberg's *Die glückliche Hand*. His friendship with Schoenberg was long-lasting, though his post-war involvement with the Bauhaus in Weimar provoked a serious rift between them because of reports of anti-semitic tendencies there, which occasioned one of Schoenberg's most famous letters (of 4th May 1923) on the subject of politics, racial discrimination and human rights.

Keller, Alfred (b.1907), from Rorschach in Switzerland, was a member of Schoenberg's composition masterclass in Berlin from 1927 to 1930; in 1968 he composed a set of *Variations on a Schoenberg Theme*.

Kirchner, Leon (b.1919), composer and conductor, studied with Schoenberg at UCLA. He has taught at various American universities and composed quite prolifically.

Koffler, Józef (1896–1941 or later) was born in western Ukraine and studied in Vienna but is generally thought of as a Polish composer—the first to

employ a form of the 12-note method, as early as the late 1920s. In Vienna until 1924, he had contact with the Schoenberg circle and also with Hauer. Afterwards he taught and conducted in Lwów, which in 1939 was absorbed into the USSR and in 1941 was wrested from the Russians by the Germans. It is known that Koffler and his family were killed by the Nazis, but neither the date or place of their deaths has been established for certain. His works include songs and piano music, among these a set of piano variations (1927) dedicated to Schoenberg.

Kokoschka, Oskar (1886–1980), Austrian painter, poet and playwright, a leader of the Expressionist movement. Active first in Vienna and then in Berlin before the Great War at roughly the same times as Schoenberg. He had a stormy affair with Alma Mahler and was a friend of Schoenberg, of whom he painted a famous portrait in 1924. Gravely wounded during the war, he was later professor of the Dresden Academy of Art. His early Expressionist dramas probably influenced Schoenberg in *Die glückliche Hand*.

Kolisch, Rudolf (1896–1978), the left-handed Austrian violinist, was a composition pupil of Schoenberg from 1919 to 1922; Schoenberg ranked him among the most talented of his pupils from this period. In 1922 he founded the Kolisch Quartet (originally the Wiener Quartet), famous for playing from memory and for its championship of new music, which gave the premieres of Schoenberg's Third and Fourth Quartets and String Quartet Concerto and recorded the four mature quartets. From 1942 Kolisch was leader of the Pro Arte Quartet. Schoenberg married his sister (see Schoenberg, Gertrud) in 1924.

Krasner, Louis, originally Cherkassky (1903–95), was an American violinist, internationally successful as a soloist and also concertmaster of a number of US orchestras. Born in Romania, he studied with Louis Gruenberg in Boston; he based himself in Vienna during the late 1920s and early 30s, becoming an exponent of the works of the Schoenberg school. He commissioned and premiered Alban Berg's Violin Concerto and later premiered the Violin Concerto of Schoenberg. He taught violin at the Universities of Cleveland and Syracuse, was associated with the summer schools at Tanglewood, and made many recordings.

Kraus, Karl (1874–1936), Australian poet and satirist, founder of and virtually sole contributor to the social and literary periodical *Die Fackel* (The Torch) which he published from 1899 until his death. He was the leading spokesman for the most advanced wing of the creative generation of Viennese that included Schoenberg. Deeply distressed by what he saw as the collapse of Western cultural values, he was obsessed with the rejuvenation of language ('the crystallized tradition of the spirit of man') through the rejection of all cliché, ornament or falsity; and his work inhabits the sounds and rhythms of German so completely as to be

virtually untranslatable. Kraus wrote essays, poetry and plays, of which the best known is probably the ironic epic *The Last Days of Mankind* (1919). Schoenberg's own literary style was deeply influenced by Kraus, with whom he was on friendly terms.

Krüger, Viktor (1887–?) studied conducting and philosophy with Artur Nikisch and music first with Guido Adler and then with Schoenberg from 1904 to 1907. He later emigrated to Chile, where he worked as a composer and music-critic. Krüger was the primary witness to Mathilde Schoenberg's elopement with Richard Gerstl, of which he sent a private account to Schoenberg's widow in a letter written in 1954.

Labor, Josef (1842–1924) Austrian composer and organist (blind), pupil—like Schubert and Bruckner—of Simon Sechter. He encouraged the young Schoenberg to devote himself to music, and later collaborated with him on a volume of the *Denkmaler der Tonkunst in Österreich*. Labor's own works include chamber music, orchestral and organ pieces. Said to have been the philosopher Wittgenstein's favourite composer.

Lehner, Eugen (b.1906) was the violist of the Kolisch Quartet from 1927 to 1938.

Linke, Karl (1884–1938) studied with Schoenberg from 1909 to 1912 and was co-editor of the symposium published by Schoenberg's pupils in the latter year. He subsequently worked in the field of music education.

Loos, Adolf (1870–1933), the Austrian architect, was a leading figure of the Viennese cultural ferment at the turn of the century. He argued for—and in the comparatively few buildings he was commissioned to design, practised—a return to classical forms, simple, regular plans, symmetry and absence of ornament. Schoenberg and he had a high mutual regard: Schoenberg did his best to persuade people to give Loos commissions, and Loos helped to finance some of Schoenberg's early concerts.

Malkin, Joseph (1879–1969) was a Russian cellist who played with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra before emigrating to the USA in 1914, where he played with the Boston and Chicago Symphony Orchestras. In 1933 he founded the Malkin Conservatory in Boston, and engaged Schoenberg to teach there during 1933–34, enabling him to come to the USA with the assurance of work.

Newlin, Dika (1923–2006), composer and musicologist, studied with Schoenberg at UCLA from 1939 to 1941 and later taught at several American universities, establishing the music department at Drew University, NJ. She wrote extensively on Schoenberg: her principal books include *Bruckner—Mahler—Schoenberg* (1949), the translations for the original edition of *Style and Idea*, and *Schoenberg Remembered* (1980), an edition of the daily diaries she kept as a member of Schoenberg's classes. Her original works include three operas, a piano concerto, group and mixed media compositions. In her seventies she posed for a pin-up calendar,

performed as an Elvis Presley impersonator, and fronted a punk rock band, Apocowlypso; she also acted (usually in leather-clad punk roles) in a number of horror movies.

Newman, Alfred (1901–1970), the distinguished Hollywood film composer, studied privately and played tennis with Schoenberg in 1936–37. He was responsible for arranging the Kolisch Quartet's historic recording of Schoenberg's complete string quartets at United Artists studios. Newman's many classic film scores include *Wuthering Heights* (1939), *Song of Bernadette* (1943), *Captain from Castile* (1947) and *All About Eve* (1950).

Nono, Nuria Dorothea (1932–), the first child of Arnold and Gertrud Schoenberg, married the important Venetian composer Luigi Nono (1924–1990). She has compiled books and generally been active in the cause of her father's music. Currently (2004) she is President of the Board of Trustees of the Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna.

Pappenheim, Marie (1882–1966), born in Pressburg (Bratislava), was a doctor—she specialized in skin diseases—and poet. Her poems were published in Karl Kraus's *Die Fackel*, and in 1909, while still a medical student in Vienna, she became part of Schoenberg's circle. He painted her portrait; she provided the libretto for *Erwartung*. In a will he made in 1915, Schoenberg named her as his literary executor and they remained good friends. Pappenheim served in cholera epidemics in Istanbul and Bulgaria before the Great War, and later worked in Mexico.

Pisk, Paul Amadeus (1893–1990), a pupil of Franz Schreker and Guido Adler at Vienna University, studied composition with Schoenberg in Vienna from 1917 to 1919 and was a founder member of the International Society for Contemporary Music. After teaching music theory in Austria he emigrated to the USA in 1936, taught in California, Texas and Missouri and eventually settled in Los Angeles.

Pravossudovich, Natalie (1899–1988), born in Vilna, was Schoenberg's only pupil from Soviet Russia. She had previously studied at the Petrograd Conservatory with Scriabin's widow Vera and then with Sergei Lyapunov. She began studies with Schoenberg in Berlin in 1929 but eventually due to ill-health migrated to Italy, where she settled and pursued a composing career.

Rankl, Karl (1898–1968) was an Austrian conductor and composer, born in Gaaden. He became a pupil of Schoenberg ('straight from the trenches') and also of Webern, from 1918 to 1922, Schoenberg considered Rankl among his best pupils of the post-war period. He was a member of the board of the *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen* and held a succession of assistant conducting posts, including at the Vienna Volksoper and the Krolloper in Berlin (where he aided Schoenberg by completing the piano score of *Von Heute auf Morgen*). In 1938 Rankl fled to Switzerland with his Jewish wife and in 1939 came to Britain where he conducted for the

BBC, was musical director of Covent Garden 1946–51 and conductor of the Scottish National Orchestra 1952–7. Rankl's own works include eight symphonies and an opera *Deirdre of the Sorrows* after J.M.Synge, which is dedicated to Schoenberg and was one of the three prizewinning operas in a contest organized by the Arts Council of Great Britain for the Festival of Britain.

Rosbaud, Hans (1895–1962), Austrian conductor, was noted for his interpretations of contemporary music. His recordings of Schoenberg's *Variations for Orchestra* and *Moses und Aron* (whose world premiere he conducted in Hamburg on 12 March 1954, as well as the stage premiere in Zurich on 6 June 1957) are classics.

Rosé, Arnold (Josef), originally Rosenblum (1863–1946), noted violinist, was born in Romania and from 1881 to 1938 was leader of the orchestra of the Vienna Opera. His Rosé String Quartet premièred Brahms's op.111 String Quintet as well as Schoenberg's first two quartets and *Verklärte Nacht*; moreover they gave many subsequent performances of the Schoenberg quartets, which Rosé declared the most significant chamber music since Brahms. He married Gustav Mahler's sister Justine; his brother *Eduard* (1859–1943), originally the cellist of the Rosé Quartet, married Mahler's sister Emma and died in the Terezin ghetto; Arnold fled to London in 1938.

Rufer, Josef (1893–1985), Austrian musicologist, was a pupil of Zemlinsky, Berg and Schoenberg, and also the latter's chief assistant in Berlin from 1925 to 1933. In the 1950s he taught at the Berlin Hochschule and the Darmstadt Ferienkurse. Schoenberg reposed considerable confidence in him. His *Composition with Twelve Tones* remains the principal introduction to Schoenberg's twelve-note method; his catalogue of *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, though of its nature provisional, is the volume with which all who seriously wish to explore the *oeuvre* must begin. He was a founder editor of the Arnold Schoenberg Complete Edition in 1961. As a teacher of composition, Rufer's own pupils include Peter Gradenwitz, Giselher Klebe and Isang Yun.

Schacht, Peter (1901–45) was a German pianist and composer from Bremen, whom Schoenberg considered among the best of his composition pupils in Berlin. He studied with Schoenberg up to 1933 but after the Nazi seizure of power found it increasingly difficult to get his works performed (mainly chamber music survives). During the war he played in a Wehrmacht orchestra and was employed as a prison guard; he was killed by a Russian grenade.

Scherchen, Hermann (1891–1966), self-taught German conductor who made his debut sharing the conducting of *Pierrot Lunaire* with Schoenberg in its 1912 tour. He championed a wide range of contemporary music, especially of the Schoenberg school, throughout his life. He founded the

periodical *Melos* in 1920 and later the music publishing firm Ars Viva Verlag. Scherchen's recordings of Schoenberg vary in quality but are of considerable interest.

Schillings, Max von (1868–1933), German composer and conductor, was a friend and champion of Richard Strauss in Munich. As administrator of the Liszt Fund he was responsible for the payment of the stipend which allowed Schoenberg to continue living in Berlin in 1902–3. After a period as artistic director of the Stuttgart opera Schillings was director of the Berlin State Opera from 1919 to 1925, being dismissed from the post after acrimonious arguments with the Prussian Minister of Culture. He became President of the Berlin Academy of Arts in 1932, in which capacity he was responsible for the removal of Schoenberg, Schreker, Franz Werfel, Heinrich Mann and others from their positions following Hitler's decree against the presence of Jews in cultural life. Having belonged to the German avant-garde of the years before Schoenberg rose to prominence, Schillings bitterly resisted further developments. His biggest success as a composer was with the sensationalist opera *Mona Lisa* (1914), but though his music shows skill and some individuality he composed little after it and his association with the Nazi regime (posthumously strengthened by his widow) has retarded his rehabilitation.

Schmid, Erich (1907–2000), Swiss composer and conductor, studied with Schoenberg in Berlin 1930–31 and then at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt. From 1934 to 1949 he was music director in Glarus and afterwards principal conductor of the Zurich Tonhalle orchestra; he also conducted a good deal for the BBC and was principal guest conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony orchestra, 1978–82. During World War 2, as a neutral Swiss, Schmid was able to act as a channel of communication between Schoenberg in the USA and his son Georg in Austria.

Schoenberg, Georg (1906–74), son of Arnold and Mathilde Schoenberg, studied with his father, worked in music publishing and was himself a composer, mainly of songs.

Schoenberg, Gertrud Bertha (1898–1967), the sister of Rudolf Kolisch, married Schoenberg in 1924. She had studied acting in Vienna; in Berlin she wrote the libretto for *Von Heute auf Morgen* and in Hollywood wrote screenplays. After Schoenberg's death she was chiefly responsible for setting up the family music-publishing firm, Belmont Music Publishers, in Los Angeles and in securing the performance of the two major Schoenberg scores which were still unplayed—*Moses und Aron* and *Die Jakobsleiter*.

Schreker, Franz (1878–1934), the influential Austrian composer, conductor and teacher, was best-known for his stage works, especially the panto-

mime *Der Geburtstag der Infantin* and the operas *Der ferne Klang*, *Der Gezeichneten* and *Der Schatzgräber*, which captivated audiences by their highly-coloured and somewhat decadent 'Jugendstil' idiom but rapidly went out of fashion in the 1920s. In 1907 he founded the Vienna Philharmonic Choir, with which he gave the premiere of Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* in 1913. From 1920 he was Director of the Berlin Hochschule für Musik, where his pupils included Max Brand, Berthold Goldschmidt, Jascha Horenstein, Ernst Krenek and Felix Petyrek. When Schoenberg arrived in Berlin in 1926 Schreker and he became close colleagues. In 1932 Schreker, who was half-Jewish, was forced to resign his position at the Hochschule and took up a master-class at the Academy of Arts, but was dismissed by the Nazis the following year. Schoenberg originally regarded Schreker as a rival, but his affection and esteem for him (and for his music) increased with the years: he numbered Schreker among the select seven 'Dead Friends' he wished to honour with the dedication of *Style and Idea* (see above, entry on *Jalowetz*).

Seybert, Lisette (1901–1983), better known as Lisette Model, born in Vienna of an Italo-Austrian father and a French mother, studied with Schoenberg from 1920 and became close friends with Gertrud Kolisch, later Schoenberg's wife. She continued musical studies in Paris but after her marriage she began to carve out a career as a photographer. Emigrating to the USA in 1938, she established herself through exhibitions and her work for national magazines as one of the leading photographers of the era. She was also considered one of the best teachers in the medium: among her many students was Diane Arbus. She used to say 'If ever in my life I had one teacher and one great influence, it was Schoenberg'.

Skalkottas, Nikos (1904–49), Greek composer and violinist, studied with Schoenberg in Berlin from 1927 to 1930, after having previously been a pupil of Philipp Jarnach and Kurt Weill. He returned to Athens in 1933, where he became a back-desk player in the Athens Radio, Conservatory and Opera Orchestras and composed pretty much in obscurity for the remainder of his life. His numerous compositions wed the intonations of Greek folk music to a highly individual form of 12-note technique. They range from the 36 *Greek Dances* to string quartets, cycles of piano pieces, large-scale concertos and symphonic works. Skalkottas seems to have had a falling-out with Schoenberg over aspects of serial technique, but the details are obscure. Schoenberg regarded him as one of the most gifted of his Berlin pupils.

Stein, Erwin (1885–1958), Austrian conductor and musicologist, was one of Schoenberg's first pupils. He worked much in music publishing, especially with Universal Edition in Vienna, and was one of Schoenberg's principal assistants in organizing the Society for Private Musical Performances.

After the *Anschluss* he settled in London and worked for Boosey & Hawkes, where he became an advocate for the music of Benjamin Britten and helped to found the modern music periodical *Tempo*.

Stein, Leonard (1916–2004) studied piano with Richard Buhlig and was Schoenberg's student and then teaching assistant at UCLA from 1935 to 1939. Schoenberg regarded him as a gifted composer. He helped finish some of Schoenberg's books; edited the expanded second edition of *Style and Idea*; arranged, edited and performed much of Schoenberg's music and was the first Director of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute at the University of Southern California from 1974 to 1991.

Steuermann, Eduard (1892–1964), internationally known concert pianist and composer, was born in Poland. He was a pupil in Berlin of Busoni, Schoenberg and Humperdinck and continued to study with Schoenberg in Vienna after the war. He championed modern piano music, especially that of Busoni and the Schoenberg school, and emigrated to the USA in 1936. Steuermann was the performer in the premieres of practically all Schoenberg's piano works, including the Piano Concerto in 1944. His own music, influenced by twelve-note procedures, has affinities with Busoni, Webern and Schoenberg. In 1949 he married *Clara Silvers* (1922–1982), who had been a pupil and assistant to Schoenberg at UCLA and was archivist of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute until her death.

Stiedry, Fritz (1883–1968), Austrian conductor, noted for his performances of Wagner and 20th-century music. Between 1907 and 1958 he held posts in Dresden, Berlin, Vienna, Leningrad and New York. (He emigrated to the USA in 1938.) A friend of Schoenberg, he advised him against coming to teach in the USSR and conducted the premieres of *Die glückliche Hand* and the Second Chamber Symphony. His wife, the singer *Erika Stiedry-Wagner*, was a noted interpreter of *Pierrot Lunaire*, which she recorded under Schoenberg's direction.

Strang, Gerald (1908–83), American composer and acoustics expert, studied with Schoenberg in California 1935–6, and was his editorial assistant 1936–50. He also studied with Charles Koechlin and Ernst Toch. Strang was managing editor of *New Music Edition* (founded by Henry Cowell) and co-edited Schoenberg's *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* with Leonard Stein. His own works include music for orchestra as well as computer music and works for electronic tape.

Ullmann, Viktor (1908–1944), Silesian-born composer, conductor and musical theorist, studied with Schoenberg (and Steuermann, Eisler and Kolisch) in Vienna 1919–20 and subsequently with Jalowetz in Prague. He was a founder-member of both the Vienna and Prague Societies for Private Musical Performances, was an assistant to Zemlinsky in Prague and later conducted in Zurich. An adherent of Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy, he gave up music for some years to work in an anthroposophical bookshop

in Stuttgart and was later in charge of music at the Goetheanum in Dornach. Unsuccessful in attempts to emigrate, in 1942, he was deported to the notorious Terezin concentration camp in Czechoslovakia before being sent to his death in the gas-chambers of Auschwitz in 1944. Ullmann's importance as a composer is still being assessed and several of his works are lost. The opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, composed and rehearsed in Terezin in addition to piano sonatas and songs, is a powerful symbol of resistance to the Holocaust; his earlier opera *Der Sturz des Antichrist* is a remarkable science-fiction fantasy imbued with Steiner's teachings. Among his other works are a piano concerto and an impressive set of orchestral variations on Schoenberg's Piano Piece op.19 no.4.

Violin, Moritz (1879–1956) was a child-prodigy pianist and composer and lifelong friend of Schoenberg. He received early encouragement and commendation from Brahms, and was also an early advocate for the theories of Heinrich Schenker. He taught piano at the Vienna Akademie until 1912, and later in Hamburg. Violin emigrated to the USA in 1939, settling in San Francisco, but despite Schoenberg's efforts to secure him a teaching position he was unable to resume a full-time musical career and subsisted in a variety of jobs, including as a ticket collector on a ferryboat in San Francisco Bay.

Weiss, Adolph (1891–1971), American composer, conductor and bassoonist, studied with Schoenberg in Vienna and Berlin (1924–7) and was the first American to compose music according to the twelve-tone method. His works include the cantata *The Libation Bearers* (after Aeschylus) and much chamber music; he also wrote film scores for Hollywood.

Wellesz, Egon (1885–1974), Austrian composer and musicologist, was a pupil of Guido Adler and studied harmony and counterpoint (but not composition) with Schoenberg in 1904–5. He was the first of Schoenberg's pupils to gain independent success as a composer, which helped him remain semi-detached from the Schoenberg circle; Schoenberg and he were on uneasy terms, though in 1921 Wellesz wrote the first book-length study of his teacher, which Schoenberg considered excellent. Wellesz taught at Vienna University until 1938, when he escaped to Britain and settled in Oxford as a Fellow of Lincoln College. He was one of the world's leading authorities on Byzantine music. Before World War 2 Wellesz was known above all for his ballets and operas, some of which (such as *Alkestis* and *Die Bakkchantinnen*) represented an attempt to create a new musical theatre based on Classical Greek drama. He was also one of the founders of the International Society for Contemporary Music. After the war (during which he found himself unable to compose) Wellesz concentrated on instrumental and orchestral music, including an important series of nine symphonies, occasionally making use of 12-note technique.

Wolff, Erich (1874–1913) was a pianist and composer, largely self-taught, a close friend of Schoenberg and Zemlinsky in Vienna the 1890s. After 1902 he moved to Berlin, working as an accompanist, and died on a concert tour in New York. Wolff enjoyed a brief vogue as a Lieder-composer in the 1900s; he also wrote a ballet, a violin concerto and a string quartet.

Zehme, Albertine (1857–1946), Viennese actress, reciter, *diseuse* and singer who specialized in melodrama. She commissioned several works in this form from various composers, the most famous being Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912). She toured Europe performing *Pierrot* under his direction, and remained on friendly terms with the Schoenbergs until the 1920s.

Zemlinsky, Alexander (von) (1872–1942), prominent Viennese composer and conductor: one of Schoenberg's closest friends and his only formal teacher. He was encouraged by Brahms and unsuccessfully wooed Alma Schindler, who married Mahler instead. Conductor at the Vienna Volksoper 1906–9, at the German Theatre in Prague 1911–27 (where he gave the premiere of *Erwartung* in 1924), and at the Krolloper in Berlin 1927–32; he emigrated to the USA in December 1938 but soon fell ill and eventually died in Larchmont, N.Y. When the first edition of this book was published Zemlinsky's music was only beginning to emerge from 40 years of obscurity. Now he is recognized as an integral member of the Second Viennese School and a highly important composer in his own right, one of the principal bridges between Brahms, Mahler and the new music of the early 20th century. His *Lyric Symphony*, string quartets and several of his operas have re-entered the international repertoire. To many, his troubled and principled post-Romanticism appears all the more attractive for having stopped short of whole-hearted support for the Schoenbergian revolution. Schoenberg married Zemlinsky's sister *Mathilde* (1878–1924) in 1901; their friendship was intermittently strained by the vicissitudes of the marriage, and after Schoenberg's remarriage to Gertrud Kolisch in 1925 he and Zemlinsky saw each other more rarely.

Zillig, Winfried (1905–63), German composer and conductor, became a private student of Schoenberg in Vienna in 1925 and followed him to Berlin as a member of his masterclass in composition. He was assistant to Erich Kleiber at the Berlin Staatsoper in 1927–8 and subsequently held several posts as repetiteur or conductor. Regarded by Schoenberg as one of the major talents of his Berlin Masterclass, Zillig continued to live and work in Germany through the Nazi period as Director of the opera-house in Posen. After the war he spent time in Ireland before undergoing 'de-nazification' and subsequently worked for Hesse Radio and NDR in Hamburg, where he did much to promulgate the music of Mahler, Schreker and the Schoenberg School and championed the causes of radio opera and electronic music. He made the performing version of

Schoenberg's *Die Jakobsleiter* which has been given in concert since 1961. Zillig's own works include operas (one after Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*), *Osterkonzert* for orchestra, chamber music, songs and film scores (notably the substantial score for Hans Domnick's epic travel documentary *Panamericana*, 1958–60).

Zmigrod, Josef (1902–73), born in Berlin of Polish extraction, studied in Schoenberg's composition masterclass from 1926 to 1929 and afterwards tended to specialize in music for the theatre and the cinema, adopting for this purpose the name 'Allan Gray'. In Germany he wrote the scores for the 1931 Franco-German co-production *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, and for Billy Wilder's *Emil und die Detektive*. He emigrated to England, where he composed music for the Royal Shakespeare Company's productions in Stratford-on-Avon and several film scores including Powell and Pressburger's *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943) and *The African Queen* (1951).



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I do not attempt a general bibliography of the available material on Schoenberg, nor do I indicate more than a fraction of my own reading in the course of writing this book. The range of Schoenberg literature (in article, if not book form) is vast, and grows at a formidable pace; my aim here has been simply to provide the basis of a useful further-reading list for the interested explorer, classified under a few general (and by no means mutually exclusive) headings. As well as being enlarged from the original edition this Bibliography now includes Schoenberg's own writings and correspondence. It has also been re-categorized, though there is no ideal scheme of categorization when so many publications bestride two or more genres among (for example) the biographical, the analytical, the anecdotal and the theoretic.

Naturally, in a book for English-speaking readers, I have concentrated on English-language publications, but have indicated some of the most necessary material in other languages as well. It is almost inevitable in a list of this kind that the selection of items should appear somewhat arbitrary; for a much fuller bibliography the reader is referred to the article on Schoenberg in the current edition of *The New Grove*. The Schoenberg literature astonishingly even has its own specialist journals, notably the *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* published by the University of Southern California (hereafter *JASI*) until 1998, which is continuing, so far on a more irregular basis, as the *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* (*JASC*) in Vienna. It should be noted that the comprehensive Website of the Arnold Schönberg Centre (<http://www.schoenberg.at>) makes available a multitude of items of primary and secondary literature online.

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Index

- Adler, Guido, 14–15, 46, 49, 52, 270n, 336, 341, 349
 Adler, Oskar, xiii, 30–34, 57, 76, 80, 91, 93, 121,
 201, 287, 336, 343–4
 Critique of Pure Music, 33n
 Das Testament der Astrologie, 287n
 Adler, Max, 30
 Adler, Viktor, 25n
 Adorno, Theodor, 71, 85, 145, 188, 295, 336–8
 Philosophie der Neuen Musik, 295, 337
 Akademischer Verband für Literatur und Musik, 23
 Albuquerque, 84–5
 Altenberg, Peter, 26
 Althouse, Paul, 74
 American Institute of Arts and Letters, 1
 Amsterdam, 20–1
 Andersen, Hans Christian, 45
 Angartenstrasse, 31
 Anninger Mountain, 41, 159
 Anschluss, 80
 Arbus, Diane, 347
 Aristotle, 126
 Arnold, Robert Franz, 41
 Arnold Schönberg Center, 298, 344
 Art Nouveau, 6
 'Atonality,' 5n, 126–8
 Auerspergstrasse, 62
 Auschwitz, 82, 34
 Austro-Prussian War, 24

 Babbitt, Milton, 73n, 142
 Bach, David Josef, 31–2, 34n, 37, 45, 76, 169,
 236, 337
 Bach, Eva, 32
 Bach, Johann Sebastian, xi, xv, 103, 109–12, 123,
 135n, 136, 167, 186, 231, 233, 267–70, 271n
 Clavierübung, 268
 Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, 268
 Prelude and Fugue ('St Anne'), 268–9
 Schmücke dich, 268
 Viola da gamba Sonata BWV 1027, 271n
 Well-Tempered Clavier, 136
 Bahr, Hermann, 25, 337
 Bahr-Mildenburg, Anna, 337
 Barcelona, 70
 Bartók, Béla, 57, 76, 127, 152n, 195, 218, 295, 338
 Balzac, Honoré, 19, 21, 251, 254
 Seraphita, 21, 251, 254
 Bauhaus, 61n
 B.B.C., 69
 Beaumont, Anthony, 175
 Beecham, Sir Thomas, 271

 Beethoven, Ludwig van, 47n, 51, 108–9, 135, 206,
 297–8, 300
 Grosse Fuge, 108–9
 Piano Sonata No. 29, 'Hammerklavier,' 108–9
 String Quartets, 206
 Symphony No. 1, 124n
 Symphony No. 3, 'Eroica,' 109, 111, 206, 221
 Symphony No. 5, 221
 Symphony No. 9 (Choral), 109, 144n
 Violin Concerto, 270
 Bellermann, 48
 Berg, Alban, xi, 6, 8, 16–17, 19, 22–3, 32n, 46n,
 47–8, 57, 59n, 60n, 76, 85, 90–1, 97n, 103, 107,
 109–10, 113, 145, 177, 190, 235, 252, 267,
 291, 341, 345, 348
 Altenberg-Lieder, 23
 Chamber Concerto, 59n
 Lulu, 76
 3 Orchestral Pieces (op. 6), 123n
 Symphonic Pieces, 76
 Violin Concerto, 32n, 190, 298, 342
 Berg, Helene, 59n, 76
 Bergamo, 18
 Berlin, 12, 14–16, 23, 43–5, 50, 64, 265
 Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, 65
 Berlin Staatsoper, 65, 76, 346, 350
 Bernhardgasse, 56, 297
 Bethge, Hans, 165
 Bierbaum, Otto Julius, 43
 Deutsche Chansons, 43
 Billroth, Theodor, 120
 Bittner, Julius, 57, 97 and n
 Blake, William, 278, 293
Blaue Reiter, 15–16
 Bliss, Arthur, 81
 Blitzstein, Marc, 66, 337
 'Blonda, Max.' See Schoenberg, Gertrud
 Bodansky, Artur, 73, 337
 Boruttau, Alfred, 22
 Bösendorf, Ludwig, 1
 Bösendorfer Saal, 1, 5, 23, 38, 53
 Boston, 72, 74–5
 Boston Symphony Orchestra, 75
 Botstein, Leon, 25n
 Boulanger, Nadia, 337
 Boulez, Pierre, xvi, 142, 295
 Brahms, Johannes, xvi, 2, 31, 34–41, 45, 102–3,
 109–12, 114–5, 123–4, 158, 177, 186, 202, 204,
 206, 226–7, 235–8, 241, 250, 267–71, 345, 349–50
 Academic Festival Overture, 269
 Cello Sonata No. 2, 124

- Brahms, Johannes (*continued*)
 4 *Ernte Gesänge*, 238, 250
Haydn Variations, 198
Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer, 241
 Piano Quartet No. 1 (orch. Schoenberg), 180, 193, 269–70
 Piano Quintet, 124
 2 Rhapsodies (Op. 79), 232
 String Quartet No. 3, 203
 String Quintet No. 2, 345
 Symphony No. 1, 110
 Symphony No. 4, 124
 Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, 234
- Brand, Max, 347
- Bratislava. *See* Pressburg
- Brecht, Bertolt, 338
- Brentwood, 76, 79, 94, 297
- Breslau, 259
- Breuer, Hugo, 59n
- Breuer, Josef, 11
- Brian, Havergal, 69, 181, 337
- Bridge, Frank, 218
- Brigittenau, 27
- Brinkmann, Reinhold, 101, 297
- Britten, Benjamin, 127, 299, 348
- Bruckner, Anton, 36, 92, 181, 299, 343
- Buck, Pearl, 78, 188
The Good Earth, 188
- Budapest, 26, 56
- Buhlig, Richard, 348
- Buntes Theater, 43, 265
- Burkholder, J. Peter, 89n, 153–4, 218n
- Busoni, Ferruccio, 9, 16–18, 57, 104, 115, 124, 177, 228n, 338, 348
Berceuse élégiaque, 16, 268n
 Concert-Interpretation of Schoenberg Op. 11 No. 2, 9, 228n
Sketch for a New Aesthetic of Music, 97n, 124
- Byron, George Gordon, Lord, 82, 220
- Café Griensteidl, 36
- Cage, John, 78
- Carinthia, 47
- Carltheater, 43
- Carnegie Hall, 75
- Carter, Elliott, 83
- Casals, Pablo, 70, 102, 270–1
- Cerha, Friedrich, 76, 208n
- Chagall, Marc, 72
- Charlottenburg Opera, 65
- Chautauqua, 75, 189
- Chochem, Corinne, 84
- Cincinnatus, 220
- Clark, Edward, 16, 69, 337–8
- Coffer, Raymond, 6n, 59n
Commedia dell'arte, 210
- Concertgebouw Orchestra, 267
- Coolidge, Elizabeth Sprague, 65, 218
- Copland, Aaron, 83
- Cowell, Henry, 348
- Craft, Robert, 86
- Daily Telegraph*, 20
- Dallapiccola, Luigi, 299
- Debussy, Achille-Claude, 57, 115, 184, 243
Gigues, 184
Pelléas et Mélisande, 44n, 177
- Dehmel, Richard, 7, 19, 36, 40, 43, 203, 208, 236–40, 254, 338
Wieb und Welt, 203, 208, 338
- Denkmaler der Tonkunst in Österreich*, 270n, 336, 343
- Denza, Luigi, 268
- Deutsch, Max, 101n
- Deutsche Arbeiter-Sängerbund, 168
- Developing variation, 111
- Dick, Marcel, 90, 338
- Dieterle, Charlotte, 94
- Dieterle, William, 94
- Domingo, Plácido, 298
- Donizetti, Gaetano, 102
- Doran, Mark, xiii
- Dorotheergasse, 42
- Downes, Olin, 103
- Dowson, Ernest, 250–1
- Dreyfus Case, 39
- Dudley, Lord Guilford, 244
- Dukas, Paul, 57
- Dvořák, Antonín, 40, 201–3
- Ehrbar Hall, 12
- Einstein, Albert, 75, 80 *and* n
- Eisler, Hanns, 38 *and* n, 56, 75, 81, 90–1, 95, 169, 180, 299, 338, 348
- Eisler, Rudolf, 338
- Elgar, Edward, 186, 269
Enigma Variations, 198
- Engel, Carl, 82, 267
- Engel, Lehmann, 73
- Estancia, 85
- Expressionism, 6, 15–16, 112–13, 228
- Eysler, Edmund, 31
- Die Fackel*, 26, 342, 344
- Falke, Gustav, 265
- Ferdinand II, Emperor, 27
- Feuermann, Emanuel, 271 *and* n
- Fitzner Quartet, 38
- Flesch, Carl, 65
- Forte, Allen, 142
- Frankel, Benjamin, 299
- Frankfurt Radio, 148, 188, 249
- Franz Joseph I, Emperor, 24, 39
- Frederick, Kurt, 84–5, 338
- 'Freisinn,' 37
- Freud, Sigmund, 11, 25n
Studien über Hysterie, 11
- Freund, Marya, 22
- Fried, Oskar, 50
- Frisch, Walter, 89n
- Frundsberg, Georg von, 240n
- Fuchs, Robert, 35, 176
- Furtwängler, Wilhelm, 65
- George, Stefan, 2, 7, 12–13, 36, 244–6, 250–1, 338–9
Der siebente Ring, 339
- Gerhard, Leopoldina (Poldi), 70
- Gerhard, Roberto, xix, 65–6, 70, 91, 101, 104, 146–7, 270, 299, 339

- Gershwin, George, 79, 295
Rhapsody in Blue, 79
 Gerstl, Richard, 6–7, 22, 42, 118, 339, 343
Gesamtkunstwerk, 259–60, 261
 Gifford, Clarence, 79
 Glass, Philip, 107
Globe, The, 20
 Gmunden, 6, 51
 Godowsky, Leopold, 75
 Goehr, Alexander, 339
 Goehr, Walter, 66, 339
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 120–1, 231, 236, 267
 Goeyvarts, Karel, 295
 Gold, Alfred, 236
 Goldschmidt, Berthold, 347
 Goldschmied, Malvina, 33–4
 Goldwyn, Samuel, 78
 Gradenwitz, Peter, 345
 Graener, Paul, 71
 Graf, Max, 36
 Greissle, Felix, 56, 62, 80, 114, 137, 339
 Greissle-Schoenberg, Arnold (grandson), 94, 214, 339
 Grieg, Edvard, 46n
Holberg Suite, 189
 String Quartet, 102
 Gropius, 61n
 Groth, Klaus, 158
 Gruenberg, Louis, 342
 G. Schirmer Inc., 82
 Guggenheim Foundation, 84
 Guilbert, Yvette, 43
 Guiraud, Albert, 17, 211
 Gütersloh, Paris von, 16, 19, 340
 Gutheil-Schoder, Marie, 1–2, 340
- Hamburg, 118
 Handel, Georg Frideric, 270–3
 Concerto Grosso (Op. 6 No. 7), 272
Messiah, 271
 Hannenheim, Norbert Han von, 66–7, 82, 340
 Hanslick, Eduard, 39, 120
 Haringer, Jakob, 252
 Harmoniumsaal, 17
 Harris, Roy, 83
 Hart, Heinrich, 243
 Hartleben, Otto Erich, 17
 Hauer, Josef Matthias, 57–9, 98, 127, 340
Atonale Musik, 127
Etudes, 127n
 Hauptmann, Gerhart, 254
Hauptstimme, 184n
 Haydn, Joseph, 47n, 193, 268n, 271
 Head, Raymond, xiii
 Heilbronn, 236
 Heine, Heinrich, 236n
 Henckell, Karl Friedrich, 245
 Henze, Hans Werner, 299
 Hertzka, Emil, 11, 74n
 Herzl, Theodor, 25n, 39
 Hesse, Hermann, 59n
 Heuberger, Richard, 34, 41, 46, 120
 Heyse, Paul, 40n, 236–7 and n
 Hietzing, 8, 15
 Hindemith, Paul, 65, 83, 180, 218, 299
- Hinrichsen, Henri, 21
 Hitler, Adolf, 62, 71, 82, 95, 220
 Hochschule für Musik (Berlin), 65, 66, 71, 345, 347
 Hoffman, Ernst Theodor Amadeus, 121
 Hofmannsthal, Hugo von, 25, 236, 238 and n, 254
 Horenstein, Jascha, 66, 347
 Horwitz, Karl, 46n, 341
 Humperdinck, Engelbert, 163, 348
Die Königskinder, 163
- Île de France*, 72
 Israel, 86
 Ivanov, 46n
 Ives, Charles, 295
- Jacobsen, Jens Peter, 36, 41, 159, 241, 341
Guresange, 41, 341
 Jalowetz, Heinrich, 46n, 47, 341, 348
 Janáček, Léos, 211
 Jarnach, Philipp, 347
 Joseph II, Emperor, 26
 Juilliard School of Music, 75
 Juon, Paul, 180
Kammersymphonie, 180
- Kabbala, 171
 Kalbeck, Max, 2, 120
 Kandinsky, Wassily, 9, 15, 19, 21, 60–1, 61n, 95,
 117, 259, 341
Der gelbe Klang, 259, 341
 Kant, Immanuel, 30, 33n, 120–1
Critique of Pure Reason, 33n
 Karlshagen, 21
 Karpath, Ludwig, 2
 Keller, Alfred, 66, 68, 341
 Keller, Gottfried, 236, 240–2
 Keller, Hans, 32n, 136, 336
 Kierling, 32
 Kirchner, Leon, 78, 341
 Klebe, Giseler, 345
 Kleiber, Erich, 65, 76, 350
 Klein, Fritz Heinrich, 59n
Die Maschine, 59n
 Kleine Pfargasse, 31
 Klemperer, Otto, 65, 188–9
 Klemperer, Viktor, 244
 Klimt, Gustav, 25, 53
Des Knaben Wunderhorn, 240 and n, 243
 Kodály, Zoltán, 57
 Koechlin, Charles, 348
 Koffler, József, 82, 341–2
 Kokoschka, Oskar, 26, 73, 259, 342
 Kolisch, Rudolf, 56, 60n, 63, 65, 79, 81, 145, 268,
 297, 342, 346, 348
 Kolisch Quartet, 63, 78–9, 84, 102, 145, 272, 342–4
 Korngold, Erich Wolfgang, 57
 Koussevitsky, Serge, 84
 Koussevitsky Music Foundation, 84
 Kramer, Walter, 74
 Krasner, Louis, 32 and n, 80, 190, 342
 Kraus, Karl, 25–6, 96, 341–4
The Last Days of Mankind, 343
 Kreisler, Fritz, 73
 Krenek, Ernst, 66, 77, 347

- Kroll Opera, 65, 344, 350
 Krüger, Viktor, 6, 46n, 343
- Labor, Joseph, 34, 201, 343
 Lang, Fritz, 188
 Larchmont, 82
 L  har, Franz, 102
 Lechner, Eugen, 88, 137, 145, 343
 Leibowitz, Ren  , 106
 Lenau, Nikolaus, 40, 176, 237
 Lenin, Vladimir Ilyitch, 95
 Leningrad, 75
 Leopold I, Emperor, 27–8
 Leopoldstadt, 27–8
 Levant, Oscar, 289
 Levetsov, Karl Freiherr von, 238
 Liechtensteinstrasse, 6, 8, 15, 46
 Lingg, Hermann, 236, 241
 Linke, Karl, 19, 343
 Liszt, Franz, 109
 Liszt Foundation, 44, 346
 Loeffler, Charles Martin, 65
 Canticum Fratris Solis, 65
 Loos, Adolf, 25–6, 46, 50, 65, 341, 343
 Ornament und Verbrechen, 26
 Los Angeles, 75–6, 78, 80, 86
 L  we, Johann Carl Gottfried, 243
 Lueger, Carl, 39
 Lundell, William, 111
 Luther, Martin, 240n
 Lutheran Evangelical Church, 39
 Lyapunov, Sergei, 344
- Mackay, John Henry, 242, 258
 MacPherson, James, 158
 Maeterlinck, Maurice, 36, 44, 55, 176–7, 248
 Pell  s et M  lisande, 44
 Mahler, Alma (*n  e* Schindler), 10, 42–3, 45, 49–50,
 52, 57, 61n, 81, 88, 342, 350
 Mahler, Anna, 86
 Mahler, Gustav, 6, 11, 13–15, 20, 25 and n, 39, 42–3,
 46, 48–53, 86, 92, 98, 100–101, 115, 161, 165,
 181, 229, 235, 243, 252, 337, 340, 345, 350
 Kindertotenlieder, 49
 Das Lied von der Erde, 165
 Symphony No. 3, 48
 Symphony No. 8, 19
 Symphony No. 10, 13
 Mahler, Justine, 345
 Malkin, Joseph, 72, 74–5, 343
 Mann, Heinrich, 346
 Mann, Thomas, 81, 85, 221, 267, 337
 Doktor Faustus, 85, 337
 Marc, Franz, 15, 341
 Marx, Bernhard, 48
 Mattsee, 42, 60–1
 Meidling, 37
 Mendelssohn, Felix, 226
 Messiaen, Olivier, 295
 Metropolitan Opera House (Philadelphia), 74
 Meyer, Carl Ferdinand, 164
 Milhaud, Darius, 57, 83, 127, 295
 Mitropoulos, Dmitri, 190
 Mittersill, 82
- Model, Lisette. See Seybert, Lisette
 M  dling, 37, 41, 45, 56, 94, 297
 Moldenhauer, Hans, 175
 Monn, Georg Matthias, 47n, 70, 270–2
 Cello Concerto in G minor, 270n
 Harpichord Concerto in D minor, 270–2
 ‘Monotonicity,’ 122
 Monteverdi, Claudio, 339
 Morgenstern, Christian, 43
 Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 30, 39, 47n, 103, 109,
 181, 193, 265n, 297, 300
 String Quartet K428, 136
 Die Zauberfl  te, 248
 Muck, Karl, 74
 Munch, Edvard, 339
 M  nch, Georg, xv
 Munich, 15, 82, 253
 M  nter, Gabriele, 15
 Murnau, 15
Musical America, 74
 ‘Musical Idea.’ See *Musikalische Gedanken*
Musical Opinion, 69
Musikalische Gedanken, 98–9, 142, 144
 Musikverein, 298
 Musil, Robert, 25
 Mussolini, Benito, 57
- Nachod, Fritz, 28, 31, 37
 Nachod, Hans, 12, 22, 28, 82, 236n
 Nachod, Heinrich, 29
 Nachod, Hermine, 29
 Nachod, Mela, 29, 82
 Nachod, Olga (Countess Pascotini), 29, 56
 Nagano, Kent, 164n
 Napoleon Buonaparte, 220–21
 NBC Radio, 111
 Neapolitan relationships, 124–5, 154, 236n
 Neff, Severine, 99
 Neighbour, Oliver, 154n
Neue Freie Presse, 39
Neue Wiener Tageblatt, 1
 Newcastle, 16
 Newlin, Dika, 78, 88, 90, 91n, 94, 104, 206n, 236n, 343–4
 Newman, Alfred, 78, 344
 New York, 73–5
 New York Philharmonic Orchestra, 6, 53
 Nielsen, Carl, 299
 Nietzsche, Friedrich, 104, 242
 Nikisch, Artur, 343
 Nolde, Emil, 16
 Nono, Luigi, 344
 North Rockingham Avenue, 76
 Novakovic, Olga, 56
 N  rnberger Platz, 66
- Obere Donaustrasse, 27
 Offenbach, Jacques, 29, 79
 The Tales of Hoffmann, 29
- Palais Fanto, 298
 Palestine, 75
 Palestrina, 97
 Missa Papae Marcelli, 97
Pan, 17

Pantonalität, 148
 Pappenheim, Berta, 11
 Pappenheim, Marie, 11, 63, 254, 255n, 344
 Paris, 71
 Pärt, Arvo, 107
 Pascotini, Countess. *See* Nachod, Olga
 Payerbach, 38, 40
 Payne, Anthony, ix
 Pergolesi, Giovanni Batista, 270
 Peters Edition, 21
 Petrarch, 213, 243
 Petrassi, Goffredo, 299
 Petyrek, Felix, 347
 Pfau, Ludwig, 236–7
 Pfitzner, Hans, 97
 Futuristengefahr, 97n
 Palestrina, 97
 Philadelphia Orchestra, 74, 190
 Piatigorsky, Gregor, 65
 Pieau, Walter, 31, 39
 Pijper, Willem, 57
 Pisk, Paul Amadeus, 56, 65, 344
 Plato, 98
 Polnauer, Josef, 76
 'Polyhymnia,' 34, 175
 Porter, Cole, 76
 Posa, Oscar von, 50
 Pound, Ezra, xv
 Prague, 20, 27, 29, 57, 64
 Pravosudovich, Natalie, 66, 344
 Pressburg, 27, 29, 42, 56n
 Princeton University, 75
 Pro Arte Quartet, 342
 Prokofiev, Sergei, 127, 218
 Prussian Academy of Arts, 64, 71
 Puccini, Giacomo, 263

 Rankl, Karl, 56, 114, 275, 344–5
 Deirdre of the Sorrows, 345
 Ravel, Maurice, 57, 97
 RCA Victor, 74
 Reform Judaism, 28, 33
 Reger, Max, 57, 115, 186, 268
 Ein romantische Suite, 268
 Reich, Steve, 107
 Reich, Willi, 89n
 Reinecke, Hertha, 249
 Reiner, Fritz, 197
 Reinhardt, Max, 69, 340
 Reinick, Robert, 236
 Respighi, Ottorino, 65, 269
 Trittico Botticelliano, 65
 Riemann, Hugo, 109
 Rilke, Rainer Maria, 248, 250–1
 Ringtheater, 28–9, 56
 Roddie, 105
 Rosbaud, Hans, vii, 188, 249, 345
 Rosé, Arnold, 2, 46, 345
 Rosé Quartet, 1–2, 345
 Rubbra, Edmund, 149
 Rufer, Josef, 54, 60, 65–6, 192, 229, 267, 297, 345
 Composition with Twelve Tones, 345
 The Works of Arnold Schoenberg, 345
 Runes, Dagobert D., 173

Salus, Hugo, 265
 Salzburg, 60
 Satie, Erik, 57
 Schacht, Peter, 66, 345
 Schaufler, Robert, 118
 Schenker, Heinrich, 143–4, 349
 Syrtian Dances, 144, 177
 Scherchen, Hermann, 18, 345–6
 Scheu, Josef, 37
 Schickaneder, Emanuel, 265n
 Schiele, Egon, 26, 340
 Schiller, Friedrich, 31, 120
 Schillings, Max von, 44, 71, 346
 Schindler, Alma. *See* Mahler, Alma
 Schirmer, Gustave, 82
 Schlaf, Johannes, 240
 Schlegel, August Wilhelm, 121
 Schleiermacher, Steffen, 59n
 Schmid, Erich, 66–7, 82n, 150, 346
 Schmidt, Christian Martin, 297
 Schmidt, Franz, 32, 46, 57, 108, 336
 Schnabel, Artur, 65
 Schnitzler, Arthur, 25
 Schoenberg, Arnold

 LIFE
 Army service, 55–6, 113, 266, 275
 Concerts, 1–2, 12–13
 Diary, 8, 119, 183, 185
 Esoteric interests, 86–7, 93–4
 Family, 27–9
 Health, 28, 70, 75, 83–4, 221
 Inventions, 92
 Letters, 9, 14, 21, 55, 59, 60–3, 86, 95, 144n, 145,
 179–80, 182, 197–8, 271, 276, 287
 Origins, 26–8
 Paintings, 9, 13, 101
 Personality, 89–105
 Publishing, 11, 21
 Political convictions, 32, 37, 60–1, 72, 95
 Religious beliefs, 28, 33, 39–40, 61, 71–2, 86, 92–3,
 103–4, 292–3
 Reputation, ix–xii
 Reviews, 2, 17, 21, 39
 Teaching, 16, 46–8, 56, 65–8, 90–1
 Theories, 98–100, 120–125, 135–7
 Transcriptions, 267–70
 Writings, 80, 96

 COMPOSITIONS
Alla Marcia, 266
Am Strande, 248, 252
 2 Ballads (Op. 12), 243–4
Begleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene, 70,
 188–9
Die Beiden, 238
Brettllieder, 44, 162, 265–5
Das Buch der hängenden Gärten, 7–8, 12–13, 113, 118,
 131, 208, 226, 235, 241–2, 245–8, 257, 339
 Canons, 76, 85, 168, 267
 Cello Concerto after Monn, 70, 79, 270–2, 338
 Chamber Symphony No. 1 (Op. 9), xii, 5, 23, 52,
 67, 115–7, 124–5, 155, 179–81, 183, 196, 233,
 243, 291, 338

COMPOSITIONS (continued)

- Chamber Symphony No. 2 (Op. 38), 5, 79–80, 180–3, 193–6, 209n, 266–7, 291–2, 348
- De Profundis*, 155, 173–4, 274, 288, 293, 297
- Dreimal Tausend Jahre*, 139, 173–4, 288, 293
- Ei, du Lütte*, 159
- Die Eiserne Brigade*, 113, 266
- Erwartung*, xii, 11–13, 64, 69, 103, 113, 118, 131, 155, 163, 185, 188, 208, 222, 228, 252, 254–8, 261–2, 291, 293, 300, 340, 343, 350
- Es ist ein Flüstern in die Nacht*, 236n
- Folksong Arrangements, 268
- 3 Folksongs (Op. 49), 174
- Friede auf Erden*, 164, 293
- Gavotte and Musette, 176
- Genesis Prelude*, 159, 199–200, 291
- 2 *Gesänge* (Op. 1), xiii, 45, 235, 238–9
- Die glückliche Hand*, 7, 12, 19, 113, 118, 131–2, 165, 185–6, 188, 254, 258–62, 274, 276, 291, 293, 341–2, 348
- Gruss in die Ferne*, 241
- Gurrelieder*, xii, 12–13, 16, 22–3, 41, 44, 52, 55, 65, 69, 74, 79, 108–9, 114–5, 124, 159–64, 176–8, 181, 206, 210, 234–5, 241–3, 253, 274, 290, 298, 300, 337, 347
- Herzgewächse*, 16, 248–9, 292, 341
- In hellen Träumen hab' ich Dich oft geschaut*, 236
- Die Jakobsleiter*, vii, 56–60, 84, 88, 93, 96, 119, 133, 159, 165, 181, 185, 251, 254, 274–80, 288, 292–3, 300, 338, 346, 351
- Kol Nidre*, 79, 86, 155, 171–2, 220–1, 293
- Lied der Waldtaube* (from *Gurrelieder*), 162
- 2 *Lieder* (Op. 14), 244–6
- 3 *Lieder* (Op. 48), 252
- 4 *Lieder* (Op. 2), 45, 235, 239–40
- 6 *Lieder* (Op. 3), 235, 239–41
- 8 *Lieder* (Op. 6), 115, 241–2
- Lied ohne Worte*, 34, 226
- 3 Little Pieces for chamber orchestra (1910), 130, 266
- 6 Little Pieces for Piano (Op. 19), 15, 130–1, 228–30, 266
- Mädchenfrühling*, 237
- Mannesbängen*, 237
- Mein Herz das ist ein tiefer Schacht*, 237
- Modern Psalm* (Op. 50C), 86, 159, 274, 287–8, 293, 300
- Moses und Aron*, xvii, 62, 68–9, 84, 96, 155, 165, 254, 260, 264, 274, 280–88, 291, 293, 300, 339, 345–6
- Nicht doch!*, 238
- Notturmo*, 36, 175–6
- Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, 82, 86, 155, 195, 220–21, 233, 290–92
- 4 *Orchesterlieder* (Op. 22), 57, 132, 235, 249–52, 277
- 6 *Orchesterlieder* (Op. 8), 242–4
- Pelleas und Melisande*, xii, 14, 20, 45, 50, 52, 75, 109, 115, 176–9, 206, 253, 298
- Phantasy for Violin and Piano*, 86, 149, 224–5
- Piano Concerto*, xvii, 82, 148–9, 155, 195–7, 220, 233, 289–92, 299, 348
- Piano Piece* (Op. 33A), 231–2
- Piano Piece* (Op. 33B), 231–2
- 3 *Piano Pieces* (1894), 226
- 3 *Pieces for Piano* (Op. 11), 8–9, 11–12, 127, 130, 226–8, 230, 232

- 4 *Pieces for Mixed Chorus* (Op. 27), 165–6
- 5 *Pieces for Orchestra* (Op. 16), xii, 8, 10–11, 17, 20, 74, 118, 126, 129–31, 148, 163, 183–5, 251, 256, 300
- 5 *Pieces for Piano* (Op. 23), 133, 229–32
- 6 *Pieces for Male Chorus* (Op. 35), 70, 95, 102n, 168–71, 300
- Pierrot Lunaire*, xii, 17–18, 57, 74, 79, 108, 113, 119, 132, 163, 210–13, 249, 256, 268, 290, 345, 348, 350
- Presto* for string quartet, 201–2
- Romance*, 31, 201
- 3 *Satiren*, (Op. 28) 83, 165–8, 262, 267
- Scherzo and Trio for string quartet, 202
- Ein Schilflied*, 37, 237
- Serenade* (Op. 24), 133, 211–14, 229
- Ein Stelldichein* 208
- String Quartet No. 1* (Op. 7), 2, 51, 81, 115, 124, 148, 205–9, 241, 290
- String Quartet No. 2* (Op. 10), 1–5, 7–9, 12, 21, 23, 33, 79, 113, 119n, 152, 156n, 181, 194, 208–10, 239, 241, 266–7, 275, 277, 290, 292, 339–40
- String Quartet No. 3* (Op. 30), 65, 70, 145–6, 150, 217–8, 292, 295, 342
- String Quartet No. 4* (Op. 37), 79, 81, 148, 150, 153–5, 192, 218–20, 292, 342
- String Quartet Concerto* after Handel, 72, 79, 270, 272–3, 342
- String Quartet in D* (1897), 37–9, 114, 124, 201–3, 291
- String Trio* (Op. 45), 84, 155–6, 172, 199, 221–5, 288, 291–2, 294, 300
- Stück* for violin and piano, 201
- Suite for Piano* (Op. 25), 134, 151–3, 155, 189, 229, 231–2
- Suite for 7 Instruments* (Op. 29), 64, 102n, 139, 149–50, 193, 215–7, 292
- Suite in G* for strings, 79, 102n, 189–90
- A Survivor from Warsaw*, 82, 84, 86, 137, 149, 155, 172–3, 290, 292–3, 300, 338
- Theme and Variations* (Op. 43), 84, 196–8
- Variations for Orchestra* (Op. 31), 65, 68–70, 140–141, 148, 186–8, 198, 292, 300, 345
- Variations on a Recitative* (Op. 40), 82, 148, 155, 233–4, 292
- Verklärte Nacht*, xii, 7, 40–41, 44, 46, 48, 106, 108, 111, 114, 124, 148, 159, 176–7, 203–5, 208, 237, 239, 253, 267, 290, 338, 345
- Violin Concerto*, 79, 137–9, 155, 189–92, 218, 220, 270, 342
- Von Heute auf Morgen*, 65–6, 70, 102n, 188, 262–4, 291, 344, 346
- Waldesnacht*, 237
- Waltzes*, 176
- Weihnachtsmusik*, xviii, 266
- Wind Quintet* (Op. 26), 67, 137, 193, 214–6, 292

LITERARY & THEORETICAL WORKS

- Aphorisms, 96, 100–101
- Der Biblische Weg*, 68–9, 70, 81, 86, 92, 96, 280
- 'Brahms the Progressive,' 110
- Eartraining through Composing*, 78
- Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 123n, 348
- Hammoniclehre*, 13, 15, 74, 97–8, 100, 110, 123–5, 128, 130, 147
- 'How One Becomes Lonely,' 102

Models for Beginners in Composition, 100

Modern Psalms, 86, 93, 96, 287–8

Pfitzner, or Palestrina's Revenge, 97

Preliminary Exercises in Counterpoint, 100

Requiem, 63

Structural Functions of Harmony, 84, 100, 122, 125, 149

Style and Idea, 30n, 97, 123n, 124n, 341, 347–8

Totentanz der Prinzipien, 19, 59, 96

PROJECTS

Aberglaube, 253

Cello Concerto No. 2

Choral Symphony, 19, 58, 132–3, 181, 192, 251, 254, 275

Darhulas Grabgesang, 159

Frühlings Tod, 40 and n, 176

The Good Earth, 78

Israel Exists Again, 174, 287n

'Jewish' Symphony, 192

Odoaker, 253

Organ Sonata, 233

Die Schildbürger, 253

Septet, 134n

Serenade for small orchestra, 176

Symphony in G minor, 181

Und Pippa tanzt, 254

Wendepunkt, 182

Schoenberg, Georg (son), 52, 62, 82, 346
Schoenberg, Gertrud (*née* Kolisch), 63–5, 70, 72n, 94, 105, 216, 262, 276, 346–7, 350

Schoenberg, Gertrude (daughter), 15, 43, 56, 62–3, 80, 94
Schoenberg, Lawrence (son), 94

Schoenberg, Mathilde (*née* Zemlinsky), 6–8, 15, 17, 21–22, 40–46, 51–2, 59n, 62–4, 118, 343, 350

Schoenberg, Nuria (daughter), 70, 72n, 105, 344

Schoenberg, Randol (grandson), 27n

Schönberg, Abraham (grandfather), 26–7

Schönberg, Arthur (cousin), 29, 82

Schönberg, Filip (putative great-grandfather), 26

Schönberg, Heinrich (brother), 29, 82

Schönberg, Ignaz (uncle), 27

Schönberg, Otilie (sister), 28, 41

Schönberg, Pauline (*née* Nachod, mother), 27–

Schoenberg, Ronald (son), 105

Schönberg, Samuel (father), 27–31

Schönberg, Simeon (putative great-grandfather), 26

Schönberg, Theresia (*née* Löwy, grandmother), 26–7

Schopenhauer, Arthur, 30, 96, 120–1, 278

Schreker, Franz, 11, 22, 57, 65, 71, 97, 262, 341, 344, 346–7, 350

Christophorus, 66 and n

Schubert, Franz, 169, 176, 202, 226, 243, 297, 343

Schumann, Robert, 241

Schütz, Heinrich, 110

Schwarzenbergplatz, 298

Schwarzwald, Eugénie, 46

Scott, Cyril, 57

Scott, Sir Walter, 105n

Scriabin, Alexander, 57, 115

Scriabin, Vera, 344

Sechter, Simon, 343

Second Viennese School, 47 and n

Serkin, Rudolf, 56

Sessions, Roger, xv, 74, 144n, 299

Seybert, Lisette (Lisette Model), 56, 62, 347

Shaw, George Bernard, 168

'Shema Ysroel,' 172

Shilkret, Nathaniel, 198

Shostakovich, Dmitri, 75n, 102–3, 295, 299

Sibelius, Jan, 102, 295

Silcher, Friedrich, 217

Siloti, Alexander, 180

Silvers, Clara, 90, 348

Simpson, Robert, 299

Simrock, Fritz, 36

Skalkottas, Nikos, 66, 68, 299, 347

Smetana, Bedrich, 203

Smith, Sherman, 85

Socrates, 48

Sollertinsky, Ivan, 75n

Specht, Richard, 14

Spiedel, Ludwig, 120

Spinner, Leopold, 299

Spredstimme, 17, 159, 163, 210, 256, 260, 277, 279–81, 288

Starnberger See, 15

Stefan, Paul, 53

Stefan, Rudolf, 297

Stein, Erwin, 11, 14n, 46n, 47, 76, 268n, 347–8

Stein, Leonard, 78, 97n, 297, 348

Steinakirchen, 11

Steiner, Rudolf, 348

Stern Conservatoire, 16, 44, 47, 185

Steuermann, Eduard, 16, 60n, 79, 90, 145, 195, 297, 348

Stiedry, Fritz, 75, 193, 348

Stiedry-Wagner, Erika, 79, 348

Stockerau, 37

Stockhausen, Karlheinz, xvi, 142, 295

Stokowski, Leopold, 74, 79, 190, 195, 269

St Petersburg, 20

Strang, Gerald, 78

Straus, Oscar, 43

Strauss, Johann, 24, 60, 79, 102, 268

Kaisenalzer, 268

Strauss, Richard, 8, 10–11, 37, 44–5, 97, 109, 115, 161, 204, 208, 235, 238, 243

Don Quixote, 177

Elektra, 340

Sinfonia Domestica, 49

Tailleur, 44, 159

Stravinsky, Igor, 18, 57, 86, 97, 167, 199, 218, 286, 299

Babel, 199

Pulcinella, 270

Ragtime, 211

Le Sacre du Printemps, 286

The Soldier's Tale, 211

Strindberg, August, 9, 19, 60, 259, 278

Dream-Play, 9

Suk, Josef, 57

Sumperk, 26–7

Swedenborg, Immanuel, 19, 60, 93, 96, 251, 278, 293

Szécsény, 26–7

Taborstrasse, 28

Tagore, Rabindranath, 19

Tauber, Richard, 263

Tavener, John, 107

Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilyitch, vii

- Tegernsee, 52
 Temple, Shirley, 76
 Tennyson, Alfred, 163
 Terezin, 82, 345, 349
 Thalberg, Irving, 78
 Tippett, Michael, 339
 Toch, Ernst, 348
 Total chromaticism, 5n, 126–134, 279
 Total serialization, 142, 295
 Traunkirchen, 60, 229
 Traunsee, 6, 51, 62, 185
 Trotsky, Leon, 95
 Twelve-note method, xii–xiii, 54, 58–9, 75, 112, 134–42
- Überbrettl*, 43–4, 46n, 340
 UCLA, 76–7, 79, 83, 90, 190, 348
 Ullmann, Viktor, 56, 82, 348–9
 United Artists, 78
 Unity of Musical Space, 111
 Universal Edition, 10, 51, 74n, 76, 347
 University of California at Los Angeles. *See* UCLA
 University of Michigan, 297
 University of New Mexico, 84
 University of Southern California, 76, 297–8, 348
Urphänomen, 121
- Valen, Fartein, 299
 Vanhal, Johann Baptist, 47n
 Varèse, Edgard, 18
Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen, 56–60, 102, 267, 336, 339, 344, 347
Vereinigung schaffender Tonkünstler, 49–50
 Vienna, 1, 6, 15, 22, 27, 37, 45–6, 80–2, 86, 110
 Vienna Academy of Music and Fine Arts, 13, 36
 Vienna Secession, 25
 Vienna University, 30, 46
 Viertel, Salka, 92n
 Violin, Moritz, 31, 80, 144n, 349
 Vlad, Roman, 299
- Wagenseil, Georg Christoph, 47n
 Wagner, Otto, 25n
 Wagner, Richard, 22, 36, 40–41, 100–102, 109–11, 114–15, 123, 160, 178, 204, 206, 239, 263
Die Meistersinger, 105
Parsifal, 111, 148
Tristan und Isolde, 41, 111, 160, 227, 243, 290
 Walter, Bruno, 49
 Warsaw Ghetto, 84, 172
 Washington, George, 220
 Webenau, Vilma von, 46n
 Webern, Anton, ix, xi, xvi–xvii, 6–8, 16–17, 23, 46n, 47–8, 51, 56–7, 59, 60n, 76, 82, 90–1, 103n, 107, 113, 127, 130n, 137, 145, 155, 191, 218, 228, 235, 248, 295, 298, 341, 344
Bagatelles for string quartet (Op. 9), 228
- Concerto for 9 Instruments (Op. 24), 191
 6 Orchestral Pieces (Op. 6), 23
 Wedekind, Frank, 43, 265
 Weill, Kurt, 102, 180, 295–6, 347
Die Bürgschaft, 296
 Symphony No. 2, 295
 Weinberger, Josef, 43
 Weingartner, Felix, 52
 Weiss, Adolf, 66, 221, 349
 Weiss, Emil, 49n
 Wellesz, Egon, 38n, 47, 57, 204, 299, 349
 Werfel, Franz, 81, 346
 Werndorff, Etta, 12
 Whitman, Walt, 240
 Whittall, Arnold, ix
 Wiene, Robert, 188
Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, 14
 Wiener Quartet, 65
 Wiener Tonkünstlerverein, 34, 38–41
 Winternitz-Dorda, Martha, 12, 22
 Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 26, 143, 343
 Witz, 72n
Die Woche, 243
 Wolf, Hugo, 204, 235, 241
 Wolf-Ferrari, Ermanno, 180
Sinfonia da Camera, 180
 Wolff, Erich, 36, 350
 Wolpe, Stefan, 299
 Wolzogen, Ernst von, 43–4
 Wood, Henry, 20–21
 Wulli, 101n
- Yun, Isang, 345
- Zehlendorf, 15, 18
 Zehme, Albertine, 17–18, 163, 350
Zeit-Echo, 249
 Zemlinsky, Alexander von, xi, 6–7, 11, 14–15, 20–23, 34–46, 48–53, 55, 57, 62–5, 72, 76, 80, 82, 92, 114, 149–50, 175–7, 179–80, 182, 202–3, 237–8 and n, 243, 252–3, 337, 341, 345, 348, 350
Frühlingsbegräbnis, 40n
Maeterlinck Lieder, 23
Sarema, 37, 253
Die Seejungfrau, 45, 50, 177
 String Quartet No. 2, 21–22
Der Traumgötte, 50, 52, 63n
 Zemlinsky, Clara, 21, 41
 Zemlinsky, Louise, 80
 Zemlinsky, Mathilde. *See* Schoenberg, Mathilde
 Zentralfriedhof, 297
 Zillig, Winfried, 66, 276, 350–51
 Zionism, 39, 61, 68, 72, 75
 Zmigrod, Josef, 66, 351
 Zweig, Stefan, 25